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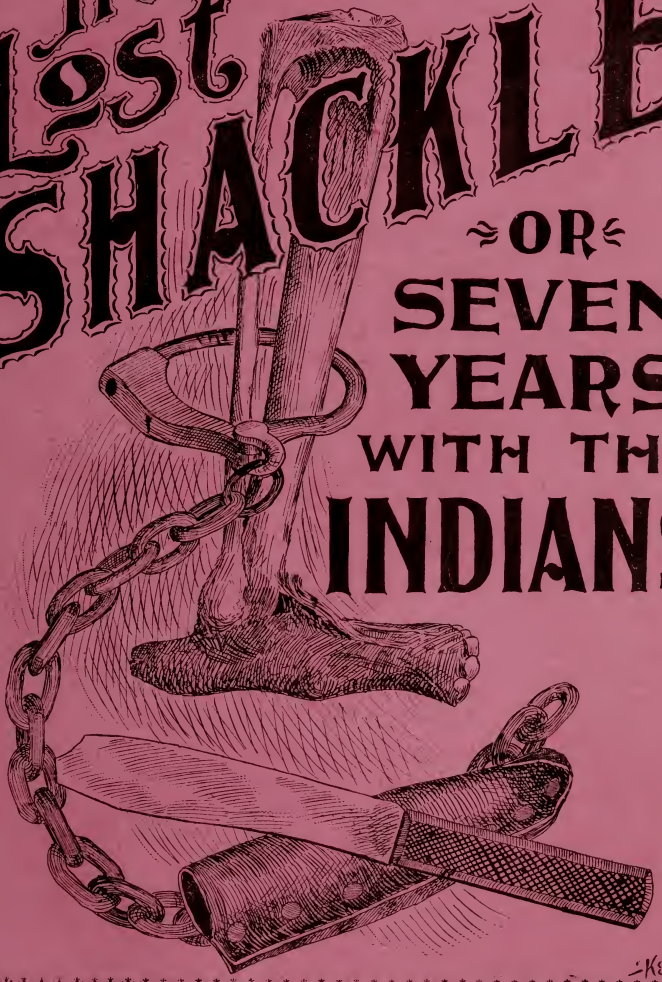
The Lost SHACKLE

OR SEVEN YEARS WITH THE INDIANS.



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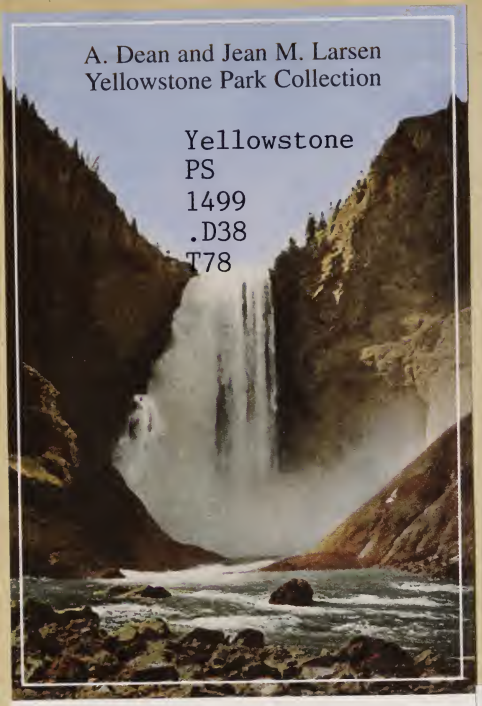

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This Book is Dedicated to my Family and Friends.

OWEN P. DABNEY.

CAPTURE OF LILLIAN BY THE INDIANS.

TRUE STORY

—OF—

THE LOST SHACKLE

—OR—

Seven Years with the Indians.

—BY—

OWEN P. DABNEY.

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CHAPTER I.

The farewell visit to the old home.

About forty years ago John Ainsley and Robert Bently who had been warm friends since early boyhood and who had lived upon adjacent farms for many years, resolved to break loose from the many ties which bound and endeared them to their old home in western Iowa, and seek new homes in the far west.

Mr. Ainsley's family consisted of his wife and two daughters, Lillian who was then fourteen and little Bessie who had just passed her eighth birthday; while Mr. and Mrs. Bently had but one child, Mathew, aged fifteen.

In those days it required a great deal of bravery and enterprise to start out as these families did, not only leaving home and friends, but leaving civilization behind them. The undertaking was fraught with so much risk and danger that people who sought new homes in the west rarely returned inside of many years if ever.

At that time the maps of the west were very incomplete, but after careful consideration Mr. Bently and Mr. Ainsley decided to follow up the Missouri river for a considerable distance and then bear off more tc the westward.

Mr. Ainsley's parents lived about twenty miles distant and only a little off the route decided upon and so it was arranged that both families would stop and spend a few days at the old homestead.

Nearly half a century before this the elder Mr. and Mrs. Ainsley and a few others, including Robert Bently's parents, had started out as their sons were now doing to what was then known as the far west and had settled upon this land when it was a part of the wilderness. Here they had lived

and grown old together; here their children were born and had grown up to manhood and womanhood.

They had seen the wilderness transformed into a settled and prosperous country. The Pottawottamie Indians had gradually given way to the white settlers until now the land of the red man was dotted over with farms and villages, the country was no longer new, and people were again pushing on to the westward.

It was nearly noon when the wagons pulled up at the old Ainsley place. It being the latter part of August the weather was dry and hot and traveling very tedious and it was with a feeling of great relief that they climbed down from the dusty wagons.

Father and Mother Ainsley were expecting them and were now coming down the long path through the garden to meet them. The children rushed into their grandparents' arms. After many warm greetings had been exchanged old Mrs. Ainsley led the way to the house, followed by the feminine portion of the party, while Father Ainsley and the rest set about caring for the horses, cattle, chickens, etc., which the Bentlys and Ainsleys were taking with them on their long journey across the country.

The day was very warm but a visitor at the old Ainsley place was never conscious of the extreme heat, for the house was surrounded by fine old oaks and elms which were mere shrubs when the land was settled by Mr. Ainsley nearly fifty years before, and the soft breeze was fragrant with the odor of these sweet old fashioned flowers which always grew in Grandma Ainsley's dooryard.

The table was set out under one of the old elms and dinner was ready and waiting when the men came up from the barn. The dinner, like everything else about the place, was old fashioned and delicious and being served as it was, out in the shade of the trees among the birds and the flow-

ers, an undescribable charm was added to the sweet restfulness of the occasion.

After the children had finished their dinner and gone off about their play, the older people lingered a long while and visited, there were so many things to talk about and the time of parting was drawing so near.

All tried to appear cheerful but there was an undercurrent of sadness which was very hard to cast aside.

The starting away of these young people into the far west recalled to the elder Ainsleys the time when they themselves had left their old New England home and had said to their parents and friends as they bade them farewell, "We will come back again in a few years." They recalled how the few years had lengthened into many and how, finally, when it was possible for them to return it was too late, the dear parents were no longer there to greet them; the loved ones whom they would have returned to see had been quietly lain away to rest in the old church yard. Time had passed on and they were now bending under the weight of nearly seventy years and they fully realized that this parting would also be a final one.

Not so with the younger Ainsleys, just starting out into a new life where they would find new surroundings, form new ties and gradually grow away from the old. While they exceedingly regretted leaving their aged parents, still they were reconciled by the thought that they would surely return within a very few years and take their parents back with them to their new home in the west.

But as their visit drew to a close and the time of parting was close at hand they found it far harder to bid farewell to the parents and the old home than they had anticipated. They wandered about, here and there, among the happy scenes of childhood. Each tree and flower, the songs of the birds,—everything seemed to remind them that

they were leaving the home of their youth, possibly never to return.

The children were the only ones who were light hearted and happy. How they revelled in the beautiful surroundings of the dear old place, romping in the meadows where the men were making hay; or roaming through the woodland, gathering wild flowers and berries; or wandering along the sandy bars of the old Missouri River, with their fishing tackle and well filled lunch baskets.

The few days had passed by only too rapidly and the morning set for leaving had now arrived. The teams hitched to the covered wagons were before the gate, the cattle which had been turned out of the corral were feeding slowly down the lane, and everything was in readiness for our little party of emigrants to get started on their long westward journey.

Dear old Mrs. Ainsley tried to speak bravely and hopefully as she continued tucking away all sorts of good things in the already well filled lunch baskets.

Grandfather had mysteriously disappeared and now they were only waiting for his return. Presently he came in sight leading a beautiful black pony, all saddled and bridled, his parting gift to Lillian.

Bessie had become greatly attached to Nero, the large Newfoundland dog and he was to go along as her special guardian.

Grand mother's parting gift was a small bible to each of the girls and also to Mathew Bently, with a "God bless you." Her heart was too full to say any more.

CHAPTER II.

The long journey to the far west. Lillian and Mathew's adventure with an Indian. Their destination reached.

For several days our little party journeyed along with little of interest to anyone excepting the children, who found great pleasure in riding horse back. Matthew had also received a beautiful bay pony, a gift from his uncle, and he and Lillian were thoroughly enjoying each mile of the way, laughing, chatting, and running races out of sight of their parents. Mathew found this far more pleasant and more to his taste than helping drive the cattle.

The days passed slowly by with little to break the monotony or vary the daily routine and our little party had been three weeks on the road without any serious interruption or accident of any kind.

Mathew and Lillian's parents were at first very watchful of them lest they wander too far ahead of the party and were ever cautioning them to always remain in sight of the wagons, but day after day passing without any mishap, it was natural for them to grow a little more careless.

They were now passing through a wild looking region, very sparsely settled. What few inhabitants they saw were half breed Indians who apparently lived by hunting and fishing. The roads seemed very lonely and unfreqnented and were little better than ordinary Indian trails.

On one occasion Mathew and Lillian had wandered farther ahead than usual and as they rode leisurely along, a turn in the trail led them into a deep gulch or ravine.

On either side the steep, rugged bluffs rose abruptly before them with clumps of bushes, scrub pines and cedars growing here and there among the rocks.

Occasionally a little stream would add to the charm of the wild, lonely scene by sending its bright waters trickling off down the stony bluffs.

Before they had gone very far a feeling of loneliness crept over both Lillian and Mathew and they regretted having ventured so far ahead of the wagons. It was now time to take up camp and while both secretly felt a little frightened and apprehensive, each disliked to acknowledge to the other so cowardly a thing as a feeling of timidity, so they wandered slowly on.

The way grew more and more rugged and the scenery more wild, and finally Lillian suggested that they turn back. Mathew at first demurred but noticing that the sun was fast sinking behind the western hills and the evening shadows were lengthening, he was very glad she had made the suggestion. He had seen no good camping place in the gulch. He knew they would wish to stop for the night where there was plenty of wood, water and good feed for the stock, all of which could be found along the river which he and Lillian had left when they entered the gulch, so he, too, concluded that they had better turn back.

They had not gone far down the gulch when Mathew descried off some little distance to the right, an object crouching stealthily behind a tree. He gave a slight exclamation of alarm which he quickly checked that he might not frighten Lillian, but she too had seen the object and knew it to be an Indian, directly past whom they must ride.

"Keep cool, Lillian!" whispered Mathew, "Let us spur our horses to their utmost and we may be able to distance him."

They could see by his stealthy movements that he meant mischief and realizing their great danger they urged their horses forward with keen cuts of the whip. The wiry little creatures surprised and smarting under such treatment sprang violently forward. Lillian's horse nearly unseated her but with the tenacity of a person in desperate fear she clung to the saddle and instantly righted herself. Down

the gulch they rode at breackneck speed. The Indian seeing that he had been discovered, quickly drew aim and launched an arrow directly at Mathew's head. Missing its aim, the arrow whizzed harmlesly into the brush on the other side of the gulch. The next one came so close as to graze his coat sleeve, but before a third could come they were out of reach of the arrows and in a few moments more they were back to the entrance of the gulch, in sight of the wagons.

Though they now felt comparatively safe they did not draw rein until they were securely in camp which had been taken up a half hour before.

With blanched faces they related their adventure to the rest of the party who had already begun to feel very uneasy about them. Thus far no Indians excepting half breeds had been seen and this occurence caused no little consternation in the camp.

They had inquired at the fort some seventy miles back in regard to the hostile Sioux, and had been informed that there were no Indians at present south of the river as they had all gone north during the hot weather and were not likely to return before the last of October.

This information had made our little party feel quite secure and the question now arose as to whether this was some straggler or a member of some renegade band. It was thought best to fortify the camp against any possible attack and that some one should be placed on guard all night.

Mr. Ainsley volunteered to watch during the fore part of the night but no Indians were seen and the quiet was only broken by the occasional cry of a night hawk or the hoot of a distant owl. At twelve o'clock Mr. Ainsley retired and Mr. Bently stood guard.

The full moon was just appearing above the eastern hor-

izon, every one in camp was sound asleep excepting Mr. Bentley and he was half dozing when the silence was suddenly broken by a shrill, fierce scream which appeared to come from the gulch where Lillian and Matthew had met with their adventure. Everyone was awake in a moment and thinking the sound must be an Indian war-whoop they were all up instantly and ready for defense.

Again they heard the cry, this time much nearer, and Mr. Bently recognized it as the cry of panther.

It had scented its prey and as it came nearer the camp it ceased its unearthly screams. The men redoubled their vigilance and rebuilt their camp fires, hoping that it might be frightened away. The cattle were lying down between the wagons and the river and that point was carefully watched.

Finally Mr. Bently discovered the animal crawling stealthily along the fringe of brush that bordered the river. They were glad to have located their game but quietly waited until it should emerge from the shadows of the brush. At length it stole out into the moonlight towards where a fine young calf was lying. At a given signal both men fired and with a blood curdling yell and a mighty leap the creature fell headlong into the brush. As they heard nothing more they were quite sure the animal had been killed and in the morning when they investigated, they found a panther which measured eight feet from tip to tip.

They were very glad to have had no more serious trouble and concluded that the Indian was a wandering hunter who had thought to capture the children's ponies.

The emigrants wished to settle somewhere near the mountains, and having heard of the Yellowstone valley, they had it in mind, thinking it would be a fine place for stock raising and agriculture.

After a weary journey of nearly six weeks they came to

a delightful valley watered by a beautiful stream. It was Saturday and they decided to remain there over Sunday, which would enable them to look over the surrounding country. It was a lovely spot in every respect. A swift mountain brook here emptying its clear sparkling waters into the river, and a grand old cottonwood grove, flanked by a thick growth of berry bushes and buck brush, made it an admirable place for camping and a delightful place for Sabbath rest.

Before them was the beautiful sheen of the rippling river and off in the distance rose the snow capped peaks of the Crazy Mountains.

The families always aimed to spend the Sabbath in rest and devotion, as nearly as possible like it would have been spent were they at home.

Sabbath morning dawned, a beautiful Indian summer morning, and their hearts were filled with thankfulness, rest and security. After they had all read and sung for a while, the children wandered off up the river, gathering pretty pebbles and watching the speckled trout jump up out of the river catching flies.

Nero, the great Newfoundland dog, went with them and in his staid sober way seemed to enjoy the sport as much as the children, especially when they began throwing sticks into the water for him to go after.

At one point near where they had been wandering, a tree had fallen into the water, making a very nice place to sit.

The more venturesome Matthew climbed out on a limb which he used as a swing, but would not allow Bessie to go out on it lest she fall into the river. This did not please the little girl who was rather self willed and who very much desired to swing on that particular limb. Accordingly, while Lillian and Mathew were a short distance away picking berries, she quickly climbed out to the coveted seat. The

clear, swift running water soon made her dizzy, and growing frightened, she hastened to climb from her precarious perch. Her foot slipped and with a loud cry she fell into the river. Mathew ran to her assistance but ere he reached the spot she was being carried rapidly down the swift current. Her broad brimmed hat, securely tied beneath her chin, acting as a buoy, kept her from sinking until Nero caught sight of her. He bounded into the water and quickly rescued his little mistress from the cold mountain river and laid her at the feet of her father who had hastened to the scene upon hearing the cries of the frightened children. This was a great adventure for Bessie but after her fright had worn away, she was none the worse for her cold and unexpected bath.

They remained in camp a few days that the men might have ample time to look over the surrounding country. This locality did not entirely meet with their approval and knowing that they were free to choose from almost any of the land which their eyes might survey, they journeyed on for another week which brought them to a most beautiful part of the Yellowstone valley, watered by several mountain streams. This valley seemed to meet every requirement and without looking farther they decided to remain and settle upon it.

At this early date the government had made no survey and so our little party immediately set about staking off as much land as they thought they could handle, intending to hold it by what was known as squatter's rights.

It was a wild looking place with buffalo, elk, deer and other game almost constantly in sight, and Indian trails up and down nearly every ravine.

The soil was rich and the feed excellent and they were surprised and pleased to learn that the grass cured in the fall without being cut. It retained nearly the same nutri-

tion as though it had been made into hay and so long as the snow was not too deep, the stock did well on it.

CHAPTER III.

The first year in their new home. A perilous night. Lillian Ainsley's disappearance.

Our emigrants now settled down as ranchmen and began at once to get out logs and build their cabins as well as sheds and corrals for their horses and cattle.

They made a strong stockade in which to keep the stock at night that it might not be run off or stolen by any band of invading Indians who watched with jealous eye the encroachment of white settlers in their territory.

It was the last of October and while the men were busy preparing logs and putting up buildings it fell to the lot of Lillian and Mathew to herd the stock. They enjoyed their work very much for they were both fond of riding and loved to be out where they could enjoy the open air and beautiful scenery. The little valley was almost surrounded by mountains which presented an ever changing view as from hour to hour the shadows were changed by the sun and the clouds.

Somethimes the mountains would appear very close by and at other times far in the distance. On the side of one of the steep mountains was a singular path entirely free from trees and rocks and extending from the gulch below to near the summit of the mountain. This, they concluded, must have been caused by an avalanche. On another mountain was a somewhat similar path which was enclosed by two parallel walls which seemed as regular and as carefully made as though they had been built by a stone mason. This they named the "Devil's Slide."

Mathew was quite an expert marksman and under his

supervision Lillian had become nearly as proficient with the rifle. Many a happy hour did they spend together shooting small game or catching trout in the mountain stream and often when evening came they would carry home a fine string of fish or mess of grouse as they drove in the stock.

Game of all kinds was very plentiful and the settlers took occasion to supply themselves with venison and other wild meat before winter set in.

Everything moved on smoothly and both families were very happy in their new home in the mountains and while they loved to think and talk of their former home and friends yet they were far too busy to be homesick.

They lacked nearly all of the luxuries and a great many of the ordinary comforts and conveniences of a well regulated home in the east but they cheerfully made the most of what they had and cultivated the spirit of contentment.

It was a common thing to see Indians passing along the creeks on the opposite side of the river and the settlers were growing accustomed to them and felt no alarm even when they came in greater numbers hunting and trapping beaver which were so plentiful along the mountain streams.

Frequently the Indians would stop and beg food which was never refused them, partly because the settlers entertained a kindly feeling towards the Indians and partly as a matter of policy for they fully realized their own lack of strength and did not wish to provoke the ill will of the Indians who, as yet, had shown no signs of molesting them.

It was now January and although considerable snow had fallen in the mountains very little had fallen in the valley. No winter morning could have been more perfect than this; the air was soft and balmy, a chinook breeze causing the snow to pack a little.

Mr. Ainsley concluded, while the sleding was good and

the weather so fine, to go to the mountains several miles distant and bring down some logs and poles ready to use early in the spring in improving his place.

He made an early start and soon reached the foothills and as he passed along over the gradually ascending road the country seemed wild and lonely to him. He carefully examined his gun to make sure that it was ready for instant use and was just replacing it when he saw a large animal emerge from the clump of underbrush which he was passing. It was perhaps forty feet from him and walked leisurely along occasionally eyeing him as though meditating an attack. It stopped and was getting in position to spring when Mr. Ainsley quickly brought his rifle to his shoulder and fired. The mules startled by the click of the gun moved the sled a little and he missed aim.

With flashing eyes the animal made one terrible bound toward him but, owing to the depth of the snow, it had not gathered sufficient force and fell within about six feet of him. Again Mr. Ainsley brought the gun to his shoulder and as the animal was ready to make a second spring fired at him once more. The savage creature dropped in the snow but whether it was killed or not Mr. Ainsley was unable to decide for the frighteded mules dashed ahead at a furious rate and his whole attention was required in getting them under control.

By the middle of the afternoon Mr. Ainsley had his load and was ready to start home. He drove briskly along for the weather was growing colder. When he reached the place of his morning's encounter there lay, cold and stiff, a huge mountain lion. As quickly as possible he removed its hide and loaded it on his sled.

Glancing to the northward he naticed a heavy cloud enveloping the mountains. He hurried the mules onward as rapidly as possible, hoping it was a wind cloud which

would soon pass over, but when he had gone only a short distance further one of those phenomenal storms called a blizzard burst suddenly upon him. The sun was almost instantly obscured; the air seemed full of cutting sleet and show and the weather had grown intensely cold. With much difficulty he threw off his load that he might travel faster. Maddened by the severity of the storm the mules became almost unmanageable and twice while he was removing his load they came near getting away from him. He now fully realized his danger, having seen similar storms in Iowa, though never one so severe as this proved to be.

He adjusted the hide on the sled and seating himself as firmly as possible started on his race for life. He knew not whether the team would take him home but being unable to see to guide the mules it was only left for him to trust to their segacity.

Maddened by the fierce winds and snow they ran as they had never run before. In many places the way was so rough that the sled was thrown from side to side and it was with no little difficulty that Mr. Ainsley retained his seat. On, on they sped over hills, boulders and through ravines, little knowing how or when they might end and fearing each moment might be the last.

The buffalo robe which he tried to wrap about him was little protection from the cold and snow, for it was impossible to keep it in place. He gradually grew numb, then drowsy. He no longer felt the cold. His thoughts of home and friends and of his great danger were no longer clear as at breakneck speed the mules rushed madly on.

He was just dozing off into unconsciousness when the mules made a quick turn and came to a sudden halt.

Rousing himself with a mighty effort he discovered that the trusty animals had stopped at the gate in front of his cabin door where his anxious family had long been watch-

ing for him. Loving hands quickly assisted him to the house and attended to his needs. The faithfnl mules were next cared for and ever afterward remembered with very kind treatment. The mountain lion skin was made into a handsome rug which, as it lay before the large old fashioned fireplace, often reminded Mr. Ainsley of his perilous ride in the blizzard on that terrible winter's night.

In many ways the winter seemed very long but spring-time came at last with all its welcome freshness. The tender grass came forth covering the valley with a mantle of velvet; countless numbers of beautiful wild flowers dotted the hill tops and mountain sides; the birds returned and once more cheered the valley with their happy song.

It was now a busy time for the settlers. Gardens must be made, more fencing done, some grain put in, irrigating ditches dug, and so many things of various kinds that in dividing the labor it was thought best for Mathew to help the men and for Lillian to herd the stock.

Lillian greatly enjoyed her free mountain life and loved to be out from morning until night. Having formerly been always accompanied by Matthew she had grown so accustomed to his companionship that she felt exceedingly lonely and missed him continually as she herded the cattle over the hills and through the vales; but especially was she lonely at noontime when she had rounded up the cattle in some shady place, picketed her pony and sat down by herself to eat her noonday lunch.

While the cattle browsed off the willow twigs or lay about on the grass or perhaps waded in the cool mountain brook, Lillian would often take out the little bible which Grandma Ainsley had given her and spend a quiet hour perusing its sacred pages.

Sometimes as she quetly sat there day dreaming amid the soft air delicately scentcd with wild flowers, the gently

murmuring brook and the sweet songs of the meadowlark, she would be lulled into a quiet nap and sleep until the cattle began to grow restless and wander off. In one of these cozy resting places was a large peculiarly shaped fir tree which Lillian particularly liked. It overshadowed a babbling spring and a large irregularly shaped rock which was overrun with wild honeysuckle. Ferns and wild flowers grew there in abundance. Some of the limbs were gnailed and bent over in such a manner as to form a very comfortable seat.

Oftentimes on the Sabbath the two families would carry their dinners and spend the whole day in this delightful spot.

While the older people enjoyed the rest and change, the children were happy with their books and games. One afternoon Matthew took his jackknife and carved Lillian's and his initials on the old tree. To their surprise and amusement they saw that their initials had spelled the word "Lamb" and henceforth in speaking of the retreat it was always called the "Lamb Tree."

At another time when Matthew was climbing about among the top branches he found the skull and jaw bone of an Indian and proudly placed them among the specimens in his cabinet.

The summer was wearing away and nearly a year had now passed without the settlers having been molested in any way by the Indians and the Indians appeared to feel very friendly towards these families who always treated them so kindly. Both families were always more or less on their guard, still they felt comparatively safe and did not apprahend any serious trouble with the Indians. How little the Ainsleys foresaw the calamity which was so soon to bring sorrow to their happy, peaceful home.

Lillian had now grown accustomed to Mathew's absence

and seldom thought of feeling lonely any more for the birds, the flowers and the brooks were her friends, and the gentle fleet-footed Gypsy her inseparable companion, and she was more than ever attached to the lovely valley and beautiful mountains.

Since the August heat had grown so oppressive she would often, after eating her noonday lunch, indulge in a quiet little nap which greatly refreshed her for her afternoon's work.

One sultry morning she had taken the cattle to the hills as usual and at noontime had rounded them up under the old Lamb tree. Then forming a little pillow of moss and ferns she was soon fast asleep and being unusually drowsy slept very soundly for some time. A slight crackling of the brush near her caused her to awaken with a start and to her intense horror she found herself surrounded by savages who were arranged in a circle about her.

Astonished and terrified she lay perfectly quiet almost fearing to breathe. What should she do? What *could* she do to save herself? As she realized her utter helplessness she offered up a little prayer that God would protect her and give her strength.

When the Indians saw her eyes open they began talking among themselves in their gruff, gutteral language and she knew from their looks and actions that they were meditating no good to her. With all the calmness she could possibly command she roused up but with sinking heart saw that a stalwart savage was holding her horse by the bridle. The Indians were evidently parleying what should be done with their captive but Lilllan was not left long in doubt for they soon placed her on her pony and securely fastened her to the saddle.

Knowing resistance to be entirely useless she offered none but in speechless terror silently prayed for deliverance from her savage captors.

Having secured her to their satisfaction the Indians hastily mounted their own ponies and all rode off rapidly toward the mountains.

Poor Lillian, as she turned and gazed longing at the old familiar haunts fast receding from view and felt how helpless and alone she was, her grief knew no bounds.

She wept as though her heart would break but received no sympathy from the gruff stolid Indians who regarded her with curiosity and savage exultation and talked among themselves with many gesticulations.

Very soon after starting it occured to Lillian that she must leave a clue of some kind to enable her friends to follow her and she quickly tore small pieces from her apron and dropped them at intervals along the road, fervently hoping that her movements would not be noticed by any of the Indians but not daring to glance backward.

Unfortunately she was closely watched and every shred which she dropped was as carefully gathered up by the old Indian who followed in the rear.

Mile after mile they followed the narrow lonely trail which led them over hills, through winding gulches and along the banks of steep ravines. In crossing through the dense woodland the path was nearly concealed by underbrush and the fir branches overhead were so interwoven as to be almost impenetrable to other than Indians or wild beasts. Lillian's hands were bound so that she was unable to shield herself or evade the branches and she received many painful scratches as they hurried rapidly along. All the afternoon they rode without halting. The day was oppressively warm and Lillian was nearly overcome with heat and exhaustion. Along towards dusk they reached the camp where the squaws were cooking their evening meal and were saluted by a number of barking dogs and gapping papooses. Lillian was quickly surrounded by the dirty,

swarthy looking people and was soon unbound and taken from her horse. She was placed in one of the wigwams where she threw herself down on an old bear skin and gave way to her grief. As she lay there unconscious of everything but the thought of her utter helplessness, a rough but rather kindly faced old Indian seated himself close by with his tomahawk to guard her.

CHAPTER IV.

The stricken parents, the search for Lillian.

LILLIAN AINSLEY.

It had been a very busy day on the ranch. They were right in the midst of their little harvest and the grain must be gathered in for clouds were slowly gathering and a rain would do great damage if the grain were left down in its present condition, so the men all worked harder and later than usual. As they drove in with the last load they were met at the gate by Mrs. Ainsley who wore a very anxious expression as she told them that Lillian had not yet returned with the cattle. "Is that so?" said Mr. Ainsley with a look of deep concern. "I will go at once and see what has detained her." He took a drink of the cool spring water and without waiting for supper hurriedly saddled his horse and started in quest of his daughter. Lillian had been in the habit of corraling and milking the cows during the busy harvest time, and it was now so far beyond her usual time of returning home that they had great cause for feeling uneasy.

Mr. Ainsley started out in the direction of the Lambtree. He met some of the cows slowly feeding along the path and farther on passed others lying down as though they had not been driven or disturbed for several hours. He rode on calling Lillian's name loudly, his anxiety increasing each moment. Not thinking to count the cattle which he had passed, the thought occurred to him that Lillian might have let some of them stray off and that she was hunting for them. He rode on and on, calling and hallooing time and again but received no answer.

It was growing so dark that he could scarcely see and the storm clouds were rolling up in great banks. A flash of lightning and a peal of thunder warned him of the rapidly approaching storm. Still he called and hallooed, thinking she might have grown bewildered and lost her way, but there was no answer excepting the echo of his own voice. With many misgivings and a sinking heart he turned slowly toward home, still carefully noticing every clump of bushes, every stone and shrub which were revealed by flashes of lightning as he passed along.

Mr. Ainsley knew not what to think or how to account for his daughter's strange disappearance. He feared some wild beast had devoured her, yet, in that case what had become of her pony? He regretted not having noticed more closely before it had grown so dark for he might have discovered some clue which would have helped him to find her. It was now so dark that it was impossible to continue the search and the rain was beginning to fall in great drops. Blinded by the storm and the darkness he gave his horse the reins and trusted the animal to find the way safely home, thinking that Lillian must surely have returned during his absence.

He urged his horse rapidly on through the rain which was now descending in torrents. As he rode up to the

cabin and saw the anxious faces awaiting him he knew that his last hope was groundless.

Mr. Bently and Mathew after taking care of the grain, seeing nothing of Lillian or her father, had also gone out and searched but had returned with the same sad results just before the rain set in.

The severe storm that was raging and the extreme darkness prevented further search that night. With impatient suspense they waited for the storm and darkness to abate as with sinking hearts they conjectured what might have happened to Lillian. Mr. Ainsley wearily paced back and forth, unable to rest or remain quiet a moment while he felt so uneasy about his darling child who he now feared was either lost or dead.

Before the first appearance of dawn, Mr. Ainsley, Mr. Bently and Mathew all started out for the range where Lillian had been accustomed to herd the cattle. They called and hallooed wildly and with the first glimmer of daybreak began searching carefully for some trace of Lillian but to their dismay found that the rain had beatten down with such force as to obliterate all tracks of the day before. All day long they searched and far into the night before returning to the heart-broken friends at home who wearily waited and prayed for Lillian's safe return. Day after day they pursued the search and night after night were forced to return without any trace of Lillian. They were unable to find any clew that would give them an idea as to what had become of the child.

The older people at length rather settled upon the idea that a band of the large grey wolves, occasionally seen in the mountains, must have overtaken Lillian and her pony, dragged them to some lonely gulch and devoured them. This conclusion was forced upon them through Mathew having been attacked by the hungry creatures one evening some months before, barely escaping with his life.

But Mathew did not agree with them in this matter. It seemed to him more probable that the Indians had taken Lillian captive. He recalled the day of her disappearance and how uneasy he had felt about her, especially along about noontime. He remembered how his mind had kept wandering to Lillian and the old Lamb tree and once he had remarked to his father that he feared something was wrong with Lillian. Mr. Bently had paid little heed to the remark and they had worked on until night, when Lillian's failure to return was the first they knew of her disappearance. Mathew's first thought had then been that the Indians had surprised and captured her and, although there seemed little ground for his conclusion, that thought was uppermost in his mind.

Weeks passed by, the search was gradually discontinued and the Ainsleys mourned their daughter as dead. But there was one among the little party who had not given up hope. Mathew Bently firmly believed that Lillian was alive and that he would some day see her again. During their years of association he had learned to love Lillian very dearly and he could never believe in her death until he had seen some positive proof of it. As he worked industriously day after day he often made many plans for the future. His parents thought his explanation of Lillian's disappearance so reasonable that he rarely referred to the matter, but he resolved in his own mind that when he was of age and free to use his time as he liked, he would go systematically to work and find Lillian if she were alive.

He would rescue her from the Indians and bring her home to her people. Then he would build a nice little home and Lillian should be his wife.

Often after the day's work was done he would wander to the old Lamb tree and live over the happy days he and Lillian had spent together there and time and again he would renew his vow to find her if she still lived.

CHAPTER V.

The movements of the Indians with their captive.

Lillian was so fatigued and lame after her ride with the Indians that she was scarcely able to move. Her head was tired and ached severely. She did not feel enough interest in her surroundings to gaze about her but simply wished to lie still and be left alone.

The silence was soon broken by an old squaw entering the wigwam bringing some supper which she not unkindly proffered Lillian. The food consisted of a piece of half cooked venison and a gourd full of porridge which appeared to be made of roots and herbs. Even had the food been appetizing, Lillian was too tired and heart sick to eat and was about to push it away untouched when it occurred to her that the Indian woman was wishing to treat her kindly and might be offended if the food were ignored. With a great effort she swallowed a little and then motioned that she was not hungry. Many curious eyes were peeping in at the opening of the wigwam and some of the Indians were entering when they were quickly driven back by the one who had been stationed as her guard.

The hard storm which had been threatening for some time now burst forth in all its fury. Brilliant flashes of lightning were immediately followed by deafening peals of thunder which rolled and crashed as though they would rend the very mountains asunder. The wind blew violently and beat the rain into the wigwam, making Lillian very uncomftable. The blanket they had given her as a covering was anything but clean and she could scarcely bear to have it touch her, but she was so weak and exhausted that neither these discomforts nor the storm raging without kept her from falling asleep.

Sometime after midnight she awoke to find that the storm

had ceased and the camp was in perfect quiet. A little to her right sat the old Indian who was left to guard her. He had gone to sleep, his head resting on his knees and his tomahawk lying at his feet where it had fallen from his hand when he dropped off into unconsciousness.

Lillian was at first completely bewildered as she tried to make out her surroundings in the dim moonlight. When she recalled where she was and the circumstances which brought her there, her first thought was of instant flight but her better judgment soon told her that an immediate attempt to escape would be worse than useless, for if she succeeded in evading the Indian placed to guard her, there was little hope of her getting past the dogs on the outside without their giving alarm.

Again, the night was dark and she was a long way from home, in what direction she knew not. Would it not be wiser for her to remain where she was for the present than to risk being lost in the mountains and perhaps meet with starvation or fall prey to wild beasts, if she was not retaken by her present captors. This point being settled in her mind her thoughts dwelt upon her home and friends. She wondered what they would think at her failure to return at night; if when they went out to search for her they had found the pieces of clothing she had torn off and scattered along the way. She knew they would never give up searching as long as they thought her alive. But what if they did not find the scraps of clothing or any other clew, would they after a few days or weeks search give her up as dead? They knew nothing of the strange band of Indians in the neighborhood and might never think of her having been taken captive. These and many similar thoughts passed through Lillian's tired brain.—When she thought of her parents and little Bessie and how happy she had always been with them, she wondered if Mathew would

miss her so very much and if he and his parents would help rescue her. Then her mind returned to her own sad plight and with a feeling of utter desolation she sobbed herself to sleep.

About sunrise Lillian was aroused by the stir in camp as the Indians made preparations for the day's journey.

As they ate their rude morning meal they seemed to be in earnest consultation and immediately after breakfast they began tearing down their wigwams and packing everything. It was evident that they were going to make a change in their camping place.

Everything was finally in readiness. Some of the pappooses were strapped to their mothers' backs and others were placed in baskets on the ponies. One little brown pony carried five of these baskets strapped together and thrown over his back in the manner of saddle bags.

Lillian could not help being more or less interested in their proceedings though she was far from being in condition to enjoy them. They started off single file, a half dozen dogs trotting along at their heels. Lillian was not bound to the saddle this time though she was very closely watched. The rain had made the trail very slippery which prevented their traveling as rapidly as they wished and they frequently glanced back to see if their tracks had been discovered.

After moving forward for several hours they came to a narrow valley through which a mountain stream sped on its course. It was broad and shallow with a pebbly bed. They entered the stream and after following its course downward for perhaps a half mile came out again on the bank from which they entered, that their trail might be lost to any who were perhaps following them. All day they traveled on and as Lillian felt that home and friends were gliding farther and farther from her her hope of being res-

cued grew more faint and night time found her in silent despair.

Lillian gradually grew weaker under her grief and lack of proper food and as they traveled on day after day she was scarcely able to keep in her saddle. Sometimes when she felt so faint and weak and sick at heaat she wondered if God had entirely forgotten and forsaken her.

The Indians did not seem to notice or mind Lillian's condition excepting the chief's daughter, Lewanna, who was a pleasant, modest looking Indian maiden of about Lillian's age or a little younger. But Lillian was so completely absorbed in her own sad thoughts that she had not noticed the friendly advances of Lewanna.

However, a little occurance happened one day which proved to her that she had a very true friend in the little dusky maiden. They had come to a river which was considerably swoolen and, wishing to cross it, they made a sort of raft out of buffalo skins and attached it to some of their riding ponies that the loads of the pack horses might be made lighter. Lillian rode her pony as usual and when near the middle of the stream grew very dizzy and fell from her horse. She was saved from drowning by Lewanna who was riding close behind and instantly sprang from her own horse to Lillian's rescue. They were both carried down a considerable distance by the swift currant but Lewanna was a good swimmer and managed to keep Lillian's head above water until one of the Indian men came to her assistance and helped them both safely to shore.

Lillian never forgot Lewanna's kind act and felt glad of the Indian girl's frienship.

They had now arrived at an exceptionally fine place for hunting and fishing, far from the habitation of white man, and they resolved to camp there a while.

The little valley was thickly wooded, though interspersed

with stretches of excellent pasture land. The spot where they camped lay near the entrance of a deep and rocky pass leading through the mountains into other valleys and occasionally hundreds of buffalo might be seen trailing through from one valley to another.

Lillian now felt that if she succeeded in escaping from the Indians, the deep river which they had just crossed was a great barrier between herself and home and she knew it would not be prudent for her to attempt an escape while so helpless and ignorant of the country.

The Indians seemed disposed to treat her kindly but were constantly on the alert and were always careful to tie her pony in a place where she could not reach it without attracting their attention, so she concluded to remain where she was for the present and be as happy as possible under existing circumstances, but determined to be ever on the watch for an opportunity to escape. She knew that if she were compelled to remain long with the Indians she could make a friend and companion of Lewanna but she was lonely beyond description and longed to be at home. She felt that if she should be forever separated from her friends life would not be worth living. At times she was very despondent and the days seemed long and tedious, but even when most dejected she never entirely lost heart.

At night she would often dream that she was at home and that her adventures with the Ihdians was only a very unpleasant dream. Sometimes she would awaken pinching herself to determine if she were awake or asleep, and to her unutterable disappointment would find that what she had hoped to be a bad dream was in truth a sad reality, and then she would sob herself to sleep again.

As the days grew into weeks, Lillian's physical condition improved, and being naturally of a cheerful disposition she was inclined to make the best of things.

She and Lewanna were constantly together and became stanch friends. She learned the Indian language from Lewanna and in turn taught Lewanna to speak English. As Lillian grew more accustomed to her wild life and became able to understand the Indian language, she grew more interested in that which was going on about her. She and Lewanna would often paddle about in their light canoe on the small lake near by or wander off into the mountains after berries, but best of all she was glad to note that the Indians had ceased to watch her movements so closely as at first.

The fall had been warm and pleasant, but as Indian summer wore away Lillian's summer clothing felt thin and cool. For the sake of comfort she was forced to don the Indian garb piece by piece until when cold weather set in she was dressed much the same as Lewanna, and had it not been for her delicate skin, blue eyes and auburn curls she might readily have passed for an Indian girl.

Lewanna being a chief's daughter was allowed many privileges not granted the rest, but after much coaxing she induced the old chief to allow Lillian nearly the same liberty as she herself enjoyed.

This at first caused some dissention and jealousy among the Indian women but only temporarily for they all loved the gentle ways of the beautiful white girl and were proud to see her enjoying especial privileges.

The squaws were very fond of doing beadwork and did a great deal of it in the winter when they were forced to sit about the fire to keep warm. After watching them one day Lillian asked for some material. She had always been fond of fancy work and this seemed very simple to her and she found it a pleasant pastime. The squaws were delighted and amazed at her ingenuity in making new designs and

often marveled over the wonderful white girl who could so easily do work which seemed so difficult to them.

On days when the weather was not severe, if there chanced to be a firm crust on the snow, the two girls would take their bows and arrows and go out on hunting expeditions which greatly helped to relieve the monotony of the long weeks of cold weather.

The winter passed by without any incidents of especial importance or any means of escape presenting itself to Lillian. In passing along the trail she often cut her name on the trees, hoping it might catch the eye of some white hunter who had possibly heard of her disappearance.

Time rolled along in this manner for nearly three years, the Indians remaining in the same locality. On different occasions all the strong warriors had gone off and remained several weeks at a time. Sometimes they would return gruff and ugly, at other times they would bring back a lot of strange horses and would be in high spirits, and once when they returned some of their members had been killed in battle, and there was great mourning in the camp when the news was told. They all engaged in a wild, weird spirit dance in which the Indian men all danced around a smouldering fire while the squaws sat huddled together at one side wailing in a low mournful manner. This strange dance continued for several hours, then all of the belongings of the dead Indians were gathered together and made into bundles. Just at break of day, as the sun first appeared above the eastern, horizon these bundles were placed among the high branches of the trees ready for their dead companions to use on reaching the happy hunting ground.

The Indians were very superstitious and immediately set about to change their camping place. After roaming about

for several months they settled down in what is now known as Bear Pan Mountains.

It had been a long three years to Lillian and she had thought she would be glad of any change, though when she found that they were in a wilder and more inaccessible place than the last she felt disheartened and feared she would never again see civilization.

She had once prevailed upon Lewanna to intercede in her behalf and induce the old chief to return her to her people, but the result had been far from satisfactory, for it had alarmed the Indians and caused them to watch her very closely for a long time. They had grown strongly attached to the fair white girl and also feared if they lost her it would bring them much bad luck.

The next year and the next passed slowly by. Lillian had now grown to womanhood and had been five years among the Indians. It had been five long years since she had seen her home and friends, five years since she had seen a white person or a sign of civilization. But during these five years she had never once entirely given up hope of seeing her home and friends and many of her happiest hours were spent in recalling with fond recollectians all of the many little events which had made her life so pleasant when a child at home.

She often thought of Mathew and wondered what he had been doing through all these long years. How she yearned to send him some message, for she knew he would allow nothing to keep him from rescuing her if he only had some clue as to her whereabouts, One day while in their wanderings she went down to a spring to get water she carved the initials, L. A. M. B. on the large shaft of limestone which overhung the spring, and as she cut the letters on the rock she thought of the time when she had watched Matthew carve those same initials on the old tree by the

spring at home, and possibly a faint hope flitted through her mind that those same letters might in some manner lead to her discovery by her friends.

CHAPTER VI.

Bessie. A narrow escape. Mathew's adventure with a savage animal. The Buncher's prosperity. The Prospector and the Miners. The Stockman and the Indians.

The homes of the ranchmen were indeed lonesome without Lillian but time brought on its pleasures and trouble intermingled and many were their experiences which helped to divert their minds from their sad loss. After Lillian's disappearance Bessie was a special object of love and care, not only to her parents, but to Mathew and the Bentleys. She was watched very closely and not allowed out of their sight scarcely. She was a little wayward, full of mischief and fun, but the loss of her sister was grief she could not soon forget, as they dearly loved each other, and at first her loneliness and sorrow cast a gloom over all, and it was many months ere she began to manifest her bright little self again. Bessie would sometimes go with Mathew over to the old Lamb tree and they together would talk over old times when Lillian was with them. Old Nero was almost always with them and was a source of great comfort to the little girl who would talk to him as though he was a person, he reciprocating her love and attention in his clumsy dog fashion.

One day when Mathew and Bessie were returning from a visit to the tree and were gathering a boquet of flowers, which grew in profusion along their pathway, Bessie espied a beautiful bunch of mountain pinks near a heap of broken rocks a short distance away and hastened to get them, as they were her especial favorites. She stooped to pick them but sprang back with a scream which soon brought old

Nero to her side in an instant. A huge rattlesnake had coiled itself and was just ready to spring at Bessie when the dog sprung at it, his shaggy coat shielding him from its venomous fangs. He caught it, bit it and shook it until it was dead. Mathew took Bessie by the hand and petting the faithful dog on the head hastened home, thankful that his little friend had been rescued from such peril, and all loved old Nero better than ever.

As time wore on and they all began to be reconciled in a measure to Lillian's absence, Bessie began to manifest her old happy self. Her father gave her a small white pony which he had purchased from the Indians. It was very gentle and they became firm friends. She called it Pinto and it would come at her call. She was allowed to ride about over the ranch in sight of the house but not to go far without some of the older people with her. It was her special delight to ride about the meadow where her father was cutting hay and occasionally bring him a cool drink from the spring. Bessie loved Mathew and the attachment which grew between them was beautiful to see. Mathew was as careful of her as if she was his own little sister.

In the spring, nearly two years after Lillian had passed from them, an accident occurred which came near robbing the Bentlys of their only child. As Mr. Bently's ranch lay on both sides of the river he had begun fencing on the opposite side from where the house was. He and Mathew, one day in early June, went there to work, taking their dinner with them, expecting to be from home all day. As they crossed the river in the morning they noticed it was rising some but did not think but that they would be able to return in the evening as their team was large and trusty.

The day was unusually fine, the June sun shining upon the snow-capped mountains. At noon, when they led their

horses to the creek for water, they noticed that it was rising very rapidly but, while they felt some misgiving about the river ford, they worked on in their endeavor to complete their task. They finished it however sooner than they expected and set out for home. Before they had reached the river they heard its heavy roar and knew they would have a hazardous task in crossing. However, it it must be done, as the Indians were more savage on that side of the river and they feared an attack from them when night came on.

Mrs. Ainsley and Bessie had been spending the day with Mrs. Bently and they had been watching the river and were thinking of Mr. Bently and Mathew's return with great apprehension and as they saw them coming over the hill they started down to the ford to see them cross.

Mr. Bently paused ere he entered the stream to give an encouraging word to the horses, who seemed loath to enter the water. He told Mathew to pull off his boots, he doing the same, so as to be ready to swim should any accident occur. Mr. Ainsley rode up at this moment with whispered prayer and bated breath. They watched them as they drove into the rushing current and made their way toward the shore. Bessie's face grew pale as she stood, almost afraid to watch them. As they neared the middle of the current the wagon box began to float. The horses struggled on, but against fearful odds, as the wagon was slowly drifting down the stream. One of the noble beasts at last fell and the other was also drawn under.

Mr. Bently and Mathew sprang into the water and began to swim for their lives. Both were good swimmers, but the water was so cold and the current so swift that it was very difficult work. Mr. Bently however soon reached the shore and turned to see where his son was, and was horrified to see him drifting down stream, but Mr. Ainsley had

loosed the rope from his saddle, and had ran down the bank and cast it out to the struggling boy. At last Mathew succeeded in catching it and was drawn to the shore almost drowned, but was tenderly cared for. Poor Bessie in a frenzy of fright almost fell into the river in her anxiety to help her friend.

The loss of the horses was keenly felt but they were all glad that the accident had been no worse.

It was several days ere Mathew was able to go about much and Bessie and Nero were his daily visitors. The following fall Mathew met with quite an adventure. One evening while his parents had gone to Mr. Ainsley's he had milked the cows and attended to the milk, when he happened to think that he had forgotten to shut up the chicken house door which was adjoining the stable and corrals and were all nearly surrounded by a dense thicket of swamp willows except between them and the cabin about one hundred yards distant. Mathew had just turned around the corner of the cabin when to his surprise he saw a large spotted lynx standing just out side of the hen house door. He seized his rifle and with considerable nerve started toward his savage looking antagonist but when he walked a few steps toward it he felt so nervous that he thought it no use to shoot without getting up close to the fierce looking animal which never moved but looked straight ar Mathew, until he was probably within twenty paces of it. Then he raised his rifle but the gun only snapped and to his surprise he found that it was not loaded. The animal rolled his savage eyes and began to twist his tail as he started slowly toward Mathew, with a low growl and showing his long, sharp teeth. Mathew now began to walk backward toward the cabin, knowing that if he turned his back to the animal that it would quickly spring upon him, while the animal still followed him up. As he stepped inside the cabin door the beast made a spring

at him, but Mathew was a little too quick, and slammed the door; but it came with such force against, it that it almost broke it open notwithstanding Mathew had all the strength against it he could command. It was now growing dark and Mathew was too nervous to venture out again and the savage animal had his own way and as he neared the corrals he gave such a scream that it sent a thrill to every nerve of Mathew, and he barred and propped the door and went to bed in the darkness. When his parents came home they tried to unbolt the door, but found that it was not only bolted but propped up tight and solid and they wondered what in the world was wrong as they pounded on the door and called to him. After awhile he awoke and let them in, telling them of his adventure and, when he and his father went to the hen house, the animal was gone, and thirteen of their chickens missing. The next evening they both watched. About dusk the animal poked his head out from the thick brush. He saw them and instantly disappeared. The next evening he made his appearance again in the edge of the brush. They again armed themselves but before they could get a shot the animal was off again. They thought to follow him this time. As they were creeping through the brush something caught the hammer of Mathew's gun which discharged it, almost shooting Mathew in the foot. Of course this scared the animal away so he did not make his appearance again for nearly three weeks, when he again appeared in the edge of the willows. They were unable to shoot him and set a large double spring steel trap in the passage way between the hen house and a large rick of hay. For two nights the trap was not disturbed, but on the third morning when they went to the trap sure enough the large spotted lynx had one foot securely fastened in it and was raving with madness. Mathew and his father took their guns out to shoot him, but when they were within a

few feet of him he gave one quick spring at Mathew, breaking the heavy spring trap into small pieces, and had Mr. Bently not have shot as he made the spring Matthew undoubtedly would have been badly hurt. The hide was made into a lovely rug and for many years graced the parlor floor of a distinguished gentleman in the State of Iowa.

It was the night before Christmas of the same year and the wet snow was falling the same as it had been for the last two days. Mr. Ainsley his wife and Bessie were sitting by the fire place talking over old times and their dear lost Lillian. "Oh! Dear," said Mrs. Ainsley, "if we could only be back at the old home tonight instead of being cooped up here in this miserable old log shack by the frog pond." (There was quite a pond about twenty feet from the door.) "Pshaw," said Mr. Ainsley, "just imagine you home in a handsome cottage on the pebbly shore of a beautiful lake where one can sit by the water's edge, fish out speckled trout and with one swing of the rod land them over into the frying pan on the fire.

Just at this minute there was a loud noise overhead like the report of a gun and Mr. Ainsley picked up Bessie, at the same time exclaiming "Let us get out of here quickly." The cabin was lined overhead with muslin, and for the time being, prevented them from seeing what was the matter. An old hunter to whom Mr. Ainsley had given permission to winter in the adjoining cabin, came rushing to the door. He had also heard the loud report, and enquired what was the matter. After all were safely out of the cabin, Mr. Ainsley and the hunter went to see if they could discover what was the trouble.

Instantly they noticed the roof gradually sinking down under the heavy weight of snow. They immediately got props and put them under the heavy ridge poles and soon

had it quite safe. The props made the small cabin much more inconvenient, but Mrs. Ainsley felt so thankful to escape perhaps a sad accident and was very well content to live in the old cabin until the new house was erected the next fall.

Several years have gone by, and Mr. Ainsley has become a prosperous ranchman; his fields were enlarged and his herds increased rapidly, yet often he thought that if they could only have their daughter Lillian back again to fill her place at the old fire side he would willingly give up all else. But the idea that she was still living was far from him; in fact, they could not believe for an instant that it was possible that poor Lillian was still living. He loved Mathew as a son and that love was reciprocated and Mathew often spent hours at their house with always a cheering word (although downcast himself.)

Mr. Bently had also prospered and had increased his fields and herds. The old log cabins were replaced by good hewed log house, and they were really enjoying life in the Rocky Mountains. There was now quite a mining excitement in Alder Gulch and other places in Montana and the prospectors and miners began to come into the mountains in the Yellowstone country, and the ranchers had no difficulty in selling them all they could produce at a very high price. Mr. Bently was ever planning for Mathew's welfare as only a father can for an only son. Stockmen began to come into the new country slowly and locate ranches along at various places on the rivers and streams. Some of them only occupied them during the winter season, spending the most of their time in the mountains during the summer prospecting. This seemed to create quite a good deal of uneasiness and trouble among the Indians, as some of the new comers seemed to take a delight in killing off the In-

dian's game, buffaio, elk and other animals more for the sport than any thing else.

One day as Mr. Bently was hunting for some of his cattle which had strayed off he was fired upon by two Indians who lay in ambush some distance to the right of the trail, but he, putting spurs to his horse, was soon out of their reach; but they came very near hitting him as one of their arrows whizzed passed him in front, barely missing his coat.

Another day while he was in the field irrigating he heard a shot fired and in an instant a bullet fell in the ditch of water about two feet away. He looked around but could see no one, when there came another report and the bullet whizzed over his head. He now felt sure that he was the mark for some skulking Indian and as quickly as possible mounted his horse and rode to the house.

The red men seemed to realize that they soon would have no hunting grounds, as the buffalo and other game were being rapidly killed off and driven from that charming and delightful valley, as the ranchmen put in their cattle and horses. They indeed got so bad for a while that the ranchmen had to keep a watch through the day while others did their work. The guard would go with his horse and gun and station himself on some high promontory where he could see all over the surrounding country by the aid of his field glass and should he discover the Indians coming he would fire a signal shot and go to the ranch in post haste for defense and sometimes they barely escaped with their lives by hiding in the thick brush along the creek, while sometimes their cabins were being burned to the ground, which they generally defended only when the red men were too numerous for them.

The families of Bentlys and Ainsleys were never molested after Lillian was taken away by the roving band of Indians (except the time Mr. Bently was shot at, and he was un-

doubtedly mistaken for one of the stock men who had really been cruel to them) for they always treated them kindly when they came to their house and gave them something to eat if they asked for it, which they were always sure to do when they came. Of course the story of Lillian's disappearance was told to more than one, yet none seem to think other than that she had been killed by either the wild beasts or perhaps the Indians had killed her and taken her pony.

CHAPTER VII.

Matthew's twenty-first birthday. Preparations made to search for Lillian. His journey through the Yellowstone country. Winter in the Yellowstone National Park. Description. The lone Indian.

MATHEW BENTLY.

Mathew was a good, honest and industrious boy and learned to be brave as well. His birthday was slowly approaching when he would be twenty-one years old. "Let-me-see," he said to himself one day, "September fourth? Yes, just twenty days more and I will be twenty-one. Oh, what an undertaking," he said to himself, "but I *will* keep my vow."

Of course there had been more or less talking in the families and between them as to Mathew's future, but he always managed to evade any direct answer on the subject. Yet they did not have the least thought of the idea which Mathew had been carrying all these years. The fourth day of September at last came and Mathew Bently felt that he was now a free man, not

that his father really compelled him to remain with him and work out his full time. Far from it. But Mathew felt as though it was his duty to do so, and he was one of those kind of boys that whatever he thought his duty to do he was willing to perform. The morning of September fifth Mathew was up bright and early. It was a delightful one. The sun rose slowly, appearing over the mountain tops, melting the glistening frost. The air was cool and bracing and all nature seemed to enjoy that beautiful morning. Mathew went about the morning chores as usual, but singing in a low mournful tone which his father had never heard before. At the breakfast table he indeed looked and felt more sorrowful than he had for many, many months before. The thought of leaving his dear parents and friends, to go he knew not where, made him downcast, for it was a hazardous undertaking. Mr. Bently, who noticed his son looking so melancholy, at last said, "Well Mathew, I suppose you feel that you are a man today. Have you come to any conclusion as to the vocation you wish to follow?"

"I can't decide that now, father," he said, "for I have an undertaking before me which I must attend to first."

"And what is it," inquired his mother, very much concerned?

"Well, mother," he said slowly, "I have never forgotten Lillian and believe she is still living and I must find her."

"Oh, nonsense, my son," replied Mr. Bently, "there is no doubt but that the poor girl has been dead these many years, and you had better go and locate on that piece of land across the creek, for someday there will no doubt be a railroad running up this valley and it will be valuable property."

Mathew's only answer was, "I *must find* Lillian."

Mr. Bently, seeing that his son was fully determined to make the search, said:

"Well, my dear boy, if you feel that it is the only right and proper thing to do, then go and may God bless you and your efforts."

"Thank you, father," said Mathew with tears in his eyes.

Mathew spent the day in making the necessary preparations as far as possible for such an undertaking. He had taken extra good care of the horse his father had given him a year before and had him in fine condition. He was a beautiful bay horse, medium size, with white hind feet and long, heavy mane and foretop. He was very quick and a splendid traveler, was gentle and kind, and he always seemed to appreciate Mathew's kindness to him.

Mr. Bently gave Mathew his best saddle and told him that he had better get up Jack, the little mule, and take him along for a pack animal. This pleased him very much for he had really been at a loss to know how he would carry his blankets and other equipments, but he had been taught that where there's a will there's a way, and he had gone on making the preparations. He had also cleaned up the best rifle and revolver, putting them in prime condition, and by nightfall everything was in good shape for the journey, his mother taking care that he had plenty of blankets and such things.

On the morning of the sixth day of September, Mathew bade farewell to his parents and home and started on his quest for Lillian.

Indian Summer is always a delightful time in the Rocky Mountain regions. The soft breezy air thrilling with a subtle sense of rest and sweetness, and while Mathew felt sad at leaving his parents and home, yet his pulse beat high with hope.

He paused on a knoll and took a parting look at his

home. His father and mother still stood at the gate watching him and waved their handkerchiefs, which he knew had been drying the tears from their eyes. He stood for a moment, waved his hat, and passed out of their sight.

How desolate seemed that home, for the only son had left it, and they knew not whether he would ever return. Still, they had the consolation of knowing his noble Christian character, which greatly relieved their fears for him.

When Mr. and Mrs. Ainsly were informed of Mathew's departure and his dangerous and weary quest, they were very much moved by his fidility and loyalty to the memory of their dear lost daughter, and hope revived somewhat as they commended the young man to the Heavenly Father's care that night at the family altar. "Well," said Bessie, crying, "he might at least have come and said good bye."

"He told me" said Mrs. Bently "to give you all a loving farewell for him."

Mathew did not know very much about the lay of the country farther away than ten or twelve miles from home, except over the route which they had traveled several years before in coming to the country. He had decided to follow down the Yellowstone river some distance at least, as below the lower canyon on that river was considered more the Indian country, and then later would perhaps follow up some one of the rivers bearing southward.

At the end of his first day's journey he camped on the rocky banks of the Yellowstone, and after tethering his horses he proceeded to fish out some beautiful trout from its bright rippling waters which he cooked and ate with part of the lunch his mother had prepared. Mathew felt a little lonely as he lay down to sleep that night for he had never been so far from home before, but was so tired that he slept very soundly and in the morning was up quite early and soon on his way again. He passed several days of

careful maneuvering and travel, without any clue or success. He saw many Indians and their camps and with his field glass he watched them and their movements from a long distance and thereby quite well satisfied himself that there were no white people with them, and by this means, too, was able to avoid coming directly in contact with them.

In several places he saw the dead bodies of the Indians suspended from the branches of trees, wrapped in their blankets. Some of them, however, where the strings had rotted and decayed had fallen to the ground, and their skulls and bones lay on the ground bleaching in the sunlight. At one place he noticed several skulls of adults with the skin dried to their cheek bones and the most of tnem still had the war paint on them. Some of them with black, brown, and others with gray hair tied, twisted and knotted as in real life. In many other places, he found them buried just a little under the ground, with leaves and twigs thrown over them, stones thrown over some of them in high heaps or mounds. These things were all of interest to Mathew, as he had never seen the like before, and it was also giving him a better idea of their habits.

Mathew determined now to proceed up one of the rivers bearing to the southward. There was only a trail leading up the river and the narrow valley through which he had to travel for two days was literally strewn with boulders and the trail zig-zagged in every way to avoid them. At last the trail led him to the entrance of quite a deep, dark canyon. As he neared the top of the mountain over which the trail led the scene was grand.

Below him flowed the beautiful river, dashing and splashing, and which, from his height, looked like a thread of silver winding along through the narrow valley, at some points touching the side of the mountain over which he was riding and again winding across to the other side of the

canyon, dashing its waters against the steep cliffs which showed the different formations of rock in its varions colors, red, yellow, and grey, and the everchanging shades which can only be seen in the grand mountain air as the sun brings them. And as Mathew rode along he could not help but feel thankful for this beautiful world. "Oh, what a beautiful valley," he thought to himself as he descended into it on the other side of the canyon, "and what a lovely place it would be for a home." The great snowy peaks to the right rose like enormous pyramids while away in the distance to the southward were a succession of them; to the left of him were long ranges of mountains not so high but crowned with beautifnl green forests, The valley varied from a quarter to a mile in width and was watered by the beautiful river now known as the Bowlder.

Matthew had brought with him a chart which he had drawn from his geography, although it was quite imperfect at this time, and by the aid of his compass he knew that he must now be going in the direction of the Yellowstone National Park region. He not having any success in his search in the Yellowstone country now determined to try and find a way through the mountains to the head waters of the Snake river, which he knew headed in or near the Park. He fortunately had not happened to come in immediate contact with the savages although he had seen a great many of them, and only once met a small party of gold hunters, with whom he camped over night and in relating his story to them, they replied that they thought while he was quite brave and venturesome, yet they would advise him to give up the quest and return to his home. But Matthew, learning from them the way through a narrow pass in the mountains which would lead him over onto the head waters of the Yellowstone, pressed forward. Sometimes he felt very lonely and almost wished himself at

home again. Every day he would see an abundance of wild game, bands of elk, deer, mountain sheep, bevies of grouse and once in a while some buffalo, but he never wantonly killed anything except as he needed it for food. By some mistake he had taken a different trail and instead of coming out on the head waters of the Yellowstone he landed at the Gardner river, perhaps more than one hundred miles below. He at last reached the mammoth hot spring on the twenty-second day of October.

Matthew was indeed quite tired out and so were his animals and he thought it best to tarry here for a few days for rest. The scenery all along his journey had been a continued grandeur, but this locality far surpassed any thing he had ever seen or dreamed of. There had been but very little snow as yet, but the weather was getting quite cold, in fact the ground was frozen quite hard and some of the mountain streams where the water was not too swift were frozen over hard enough to bear up a horse. Mathew knew that it would probably set in stormy in that high altitude before many days, hence he wished to go from there as soon as his animals were sufficiently rested to stand the rest of the journey through the mountains, which was quite a long one yet. He had been camping a short distance from the spring in a clump of timber. There he had discovered an old wigwam built of poles with the earth thrown up against it all around, about four feet high, just leaving a place to go in and out. This he found to be quite a comfortable place. He had decided that on the next day, which would be Monday, he would start on his journey, as he had noticed for the last two days that the clouds were hovering close to the mountains and he knew that was a token of storm before many days. On Sunday evening it began snowing some and before morning it was storming very hard, snowing and blowing. For three days the storm

raged and Mathew saw that it would be impossible to go farther through the mountains very soon and set to work to fix up the best he could for a longer stay.

He already had a comfortable place in the old wigwam, which seemed to have been abandoned for many years, but the poor animals which had stood out in that severe storm were cold and shivering and must be provided for as soon as possible. He soon built a shed for them with poles and covered it with brush and pine boughs, and it was not long before he had quite a comfortable place for them to stay in at night, but of course the only feed they could get was the grass and that by pawing the deep snow from it, which was a very common thing for horses to do in that mountainous country.

Few have not read a description of the now famous Mammoth Hot Springs of the Yellowstone National Park, but to have seen them at the time Mathew was there was to see them ere they had been shorn of any of their beauty by tourists and specimen hunters and the scene then presented was simply magnificent and far beyond description. The sides of the mountains were ornamented with a series of semi-circular basins beautifully scalloped and adorned with a kind of bead work of limestone formation formed as the hot water boils up and flows over the sides from one basin to another. The circumference of the basins measured from ten to fifty feet and the succession of basins extended hundreds of feet down the side of the mountain. The water in them ranged from one to five feet deep.

While Mathew called it a limestone formation, he was satisfied it was composed of several different formalities to produce so many different colors in the bead work of the basins giving out, as it did, all colors of the rainbow. The water was so clear and blue that he could look down into the beautiful depths to the bottom of the pools or basins,

and the blue sky reflected in the transparent water gave an azure tint to the whole which surpasses all art. To see them in the sunshine, and again in a snow storm, is an experience few have the opportunity to behold. The steam rising to meet the clouds; the water so blue and deep, looking so placid and serene, defying the ravages of Jack Frost or the attempts of the snow to mantle them with her soft covering, for the heat of the vapor melts it as fast as it falls. Indeed it is a sight once seen never to be forgotten and our hero, as he remained there so long a time, had many an experience, both pleasant and otherwise, which helped to develop perseverance and encourage and nerve him for the arduous work of life yet before him.

Cold stormy weather had realy set in, in earnest and the snow got very deep and Mathew had many experiences that few young men of his age have ever dreamed of. He never lacked for plenty to eat as there was still an abundance of game surrounding him. Often bands of deer, elk and bison came trailing down the side of the mountains to the springs for water, there being beautiful springs of pure water only a short distance from his camp.

The time oftened seemed long to our hero and he was sometimes at a loss to know what to do.

One day, while he was standing just in the edge of the timber in which he was camped and looking over at the bubbling waters at the springs and the beautiful terraces on the mountain side, his eye was attracted to a lone Indian who emerged from a thick patch of willows, slowly hobbling along until he reached one of the hot pools of water. Mathew was indeed very much surprised, as he stepped behind a tree and watched him, for he did not suppose there was a human being within many, many miles of where he was camping, and in fact he did not have the least idea that he was within about seventy or eighty miles of his old

home, for the maps at this early date were too inadequate to give one much idea of distance from one point to another in the Rocky Mountains.

He watched the Indian, who sat down close by the pool, took off his moccasins and put his foot down in the water. He sat in that position for twenty or thirty minutes perhaps and then put his leggings and moccasins on and hobbled back into the brush again. This was quite a mystery to Mathew and he was very cautious for a few days until he had fully satisfied himself that the Indian was alone. Now he determined to seek his abode, and perhaps might be able to learn something or get some clue to Lillian's whereabouts. The next dav he watched for him as he seemed to always go to the pool of water at a certain time in the day, and went over to where he was, and spoke to him. But the poor old man only nodded his head and looked at Mathew in amazement, scrutinizing him from head to foot, and then took out his pipe which looked to have been used for many, many years, filled and lighted it, took one puff at it and handed it to Mathew who knew what it meant and took one puff and handed it back to him. (This was the only time that Mathew was ever known to smoke.) He then began to ask the old Indian questions but to his dismay found the poor fellow to be both deaf and dumb. He had got his foot hurt in some way and seemed to think there were medical properties in that water which would heal him. He was quite an old looking man with long gray hair which was twisted and knotted in a horrible manner. His face was wrinkled and some of the war paint still showed on his bony cheeks.

Mathew looked at him with pity as he came to the conclusion that he was a castaway from his tribe. He one day followed the old man to his wigwam door and was beckoned inside. The wigwam was built about the same as the one

which Mathew was using and looked very old, in fact, the whole premises seemed to have been used for a long time. The wigwam was lined inside with skins and furs of different kinds. There were also a number of bows, arrows, bead work of different kinds and a great many other things hanging suspended from the poles and as Mathew glanced around over the interior of the lonely wigwam, his eyes were attracted to one place where there were some furs hanging, and among them were two human scalps and by closer observation he noticed that one of them had long curly auburn hair and Mathew wondered could that have been Lillian? In an instant he was on his feet, holding one of the curls in his hand as he exclaimed in mad despair, "It is, oh it is," and his strong right arm was raised with all the force which a revengeful mind could command to strike down the savage villain who had taken from him and her parents the life of that poor innocent girl.

The old savage, seeing Mathew's look and movements instantly tripped him, at the same time giving him a push and as he fell headlong to the ground the old savage with more spryness than he looked to have, grasped Mathew by the throat, at the same time reaching for his large knife with his right hand; but Mathew being a little too quick for him knocked it out of his hand. Hard struggling ensued, our hero at length freed himself from his perilous position and soon had the old savage down under him with his hand on his throat, and as he looked into the fiery eyes of his savage antagonist, who was considerably out of breath and almost powerless, Mathew thought, "Now, shall I slay the villain, the murderer of Lillian? "No, no, I can not" said he as he loosed his grasp on the Indian, "For it may not have been him after all, but if it was God would surely bring him to justice," and as he again looked at the curls he thought, "Oh, the cruel wretch how can I let him live?" Yet Mathew

somehow feft that he had done wrong perhaps in judging the poor old Indian after all, for he may not be the guilty one. Mathew would indeed have felt sorry had he known that the taking of these scalps was not by the hand of this poor old Indian, but for refusing to participate in a bloody massacre of a lot of emigrants, he was banished from his tribe with all the threats of a warrlor's anger resting upon the poor creature's head, and in that lonely abode he was doomed to die.

Mathew left the wigwam, which was almost unbearable to him, and never more went back. For a few days after he was almost overcome with despair, little caring to live, yet his better judgment told him to have courage that after all that might not have been Lillian's scalp and finally he came to the conclusion that he would not give up hope but that he would keep up his search until something further would perhaps more certainly reveal the truth. Sometimes when the snow was frozen hard enough to bear him up he would make tours of investigation, making some wonderful discoveries. He was not long however in finding out that it was necessary for him to be very careful in traveling about because of the many crevices and pit falls in so many localities.

One day he was walking along looking at different objects of interest when he chanced to glance downward. Another step would have landed him in a chasm the depths of which he was unable to discover. This incident served to make him more cautious.

The mountains of black or obsidian glass and the petrified forest, as well as the great falls of the Yellowstone River, were objects of great interest to him.

It chanced one day that one of the shoes came off of the pack mule and not having nails to put it on again he thought he would throw it in one of the basins of hot water at the spring to see if the water would have any effect on

it. In a few days after he noticed a white sediment forming over it. In a week more he took it out. It was well coated over with the limestone formation, solid and hard, making a beautiful ornament. He also threw in some hair which he cut from his horse's tail. It coated over in the same way and he thought it quite wonderful.

The falls of the Gardner River, the paint pots of boiling substance with all the variety of color, the mud puffs were all of great interest to him, as well as the great and small gysers throwing up high into the air their voluminous steam or spray. The beautiful crested cones, the magnificent forests on the mountain sides intersperced with stretches of beautiful pasture land where the elk, deer and buffalo can be found feeding when the snow is not too deep; the rough, deep and dark canyons and the high, rocky cliffs; in fact the country about is productive of great admiration to the lover of nature's wonders and one seldom tires of gazing upon its beauties. There were several deep holes around and about the springs, crusted with the formation, in some of which Mathew was unable to see the bottom, and he came to the conclusion that they must be extinct gysers. Little did he think when gazing on these beautiful works of nature that some day, within a few hundred yards of where he was camped, there would stand a hotel large enough to accommodate one thousand people and a railroad running to its very border.

"But the world rolls on in endless years
And unfolds to man its mysteries."

CHAPTER VIII.

Mathew's journey resumed. The discovery of a strange cabin Midnight adventure with an Indian. A clue to Lillian. Sunshine Shadowed. Travels down the Gallatin River. Across the country to the headwaters of the Missouri River. A strange companion.

It was late in April before the snow was gone sufficiently for Mathew to resume his journey through the mountains. His horse and pack animal being yet in quite bad condition made it very slow traveling. The snow was nearly gone off on the south side of the hills and mountains, but in the gulches, where it had rolled and drifted, it was in some places fifty to sixty feet deep but was hard enough so that Mathew could ride over it safely. He followed up the Gardner River intending to go through the Big Horn pass on to the head waters of the Gallatin and thought perhaps he might strike some trail that would lead him on across the mountains and down into the Snake River country in Idaho; but if he had known what an undertaking this would be he undoubtedly would not have chosen this route. He was several days ascending the Gardner River and into the Big Horn pass. He had seen no evidence of human beings except that one evening as he was turning to one side of the trail to camp he noticed a rude looking old cabin to the right of him, some distance off in the edge of some timber. He rode up to it and, finding it unoccupied, decided to stay in it for the night. The cabin or hut was built of round fir logs, perhaps eight or ten inches in diameter, some of which were getting quite rotten in places. The hut was probably ten by twelve feet inside and covered over with heavy poles then earth and clay thrown on, the roof being sloping enough so that it would turn the water.

There was a door in one end of the cabin which was made of large willows, each piece being tied and interwoven with strong willow wisps but was now quite rotten, in fact so much so that the door would hardly hold together. The weeds had grown up around the cabin and grass and weeds almost covered the roof. The only place to let the light in was where a part of two logs were cut out on one side, leaving a hole eight by twelve or fourteen inches. The inside of the building was daubed with a kind of clay. The outside had also been daubed but the storms had beaten it nearly all out. In one corner was a rude fire place and, from all appearances, it did not draw any too well, as the room was smoked up a great deal. In another corner was a roughly made bedstead or bunk with forked sticks, which had been driven in the ground but was now rotted off, and poles laid on. There were also some deer horns fixed up to the logs overhead which they probably used to hold their guns. After Mathew had taken care of his horses; and cooked his supper by the old fire-place, and as he sat down alone in the light of the fire, his mind drifted back to his home and friends, and then he thought of his present location and condition, and then he looked away into the apparently gloomy future. But as he was quite tired he at last propped up the old bunk and made his bed down, and soon went to sleep. He did not know how long he had been sleeping, when he was suddenly awakened by curious noises in the cabin, overhead, under the bed, and apparently in every corner. "What in the world is it?" he thought to himself, as he listened. As he awoke, however, he turned himself a little, and the noise ceased, except a rapping noise, apparently overhead, for awhile, and then all was quiet again. "Could it be ghosts," he first thought, "in this strange cabin?" "No," he said, as he did not believe in such things, and he lay quietly listening, but at

last fell asleep. Again he was awakened by the noise the same as before. He was now determined to find out what it was. As he moved, the noise again ceased, except the rapping overhead. It took some nerve, but Mathew sprang to his feet and lit the lantern, and, with his revolver in one hand and the lantern in the other, he went cautiously about the room, looking in every corner and under the bunk, but could see nothing. At last his eyes were directed to the logs overhead, and there was the rascal who was making all the noise. A large mountain rat sat perched upon the ridge pole, holding one of Mathew's socks in its mouth. He at once shot it and heard the squabbling of two or three more, but for the rest of the night everything was quiet, except the distant howling of a band of wolves.

The next morning when he arose he found his boots had been taken off to one corner of the room, his other sock had been carried to the nest up over head, his knife, fork and spoon were piled in another corner of the cabin with some old bones and sticks, and the tin plates were under the bed. In searching around for the various articles which the rats had carried off, Mithew found a rather flat, oblong bottle, with the letters "R. I. Ill." on one side of it. On one of the logs close to the window place, where the bark had been shaved off, were the names, plainly cut: "Jack Miller" and "Bill Kelley," dated October, 1849.

Around the cabin on the outside were many bones of animals of different kinds and some elk and deer horns, also a buffalo and bear skull. Matthew came to the conclusion that these two men had been prospecting for gold. The winter had set in so early that they were probably compelled to build the cabin and winter there. The next day Mathew saw a track crossing the trail, but could not tell whether it was a bear's or that of an Indian. He still had

spells of discouragement and sometimes almost wished himself at home again, helping with the ranch work, and yet what would his life be, he thought, without Lillian, when he felt in his heart that she was still living, and with that encouraging thought he pressed on. He had been decending the Gallatin river slope for two days, and the next morning when he went to put the pack on the mule he noticed that the pack saddle had slipped forward too far and had made the mule's back quite sore. Matthew thought to ride the mule for a few days and let the horse carry the pack would be better. The mule kicked up a little at first when Mathew got on, as he had never been ridden before, but started off very easily after awhile, and Mathew began to think he had made a good change, when down the mountain a little farther it became more steep and the cinch working a little loose the saddle slipped forward on the sore. In an instant and without warning the mule's heels went up in the air, and Mathew went on over the long ears onto the ground, and before he could catch himself he rolled about twenty feet down the steep bank into the gulch below. When he got up unhurt but a little wet and muddy he could not help laughing, for the mule was standing with his front feet braced and his long ears pointing forward at an angle of about forty-five degrees, looking at him. Althongh a good rider, Mathew did not care to be taken unawares again so he changed his saddle.

At last he came to the rocky banks of the Gallatin river. It was nearly dark when he turned his horses on the grass. They were yet in poor condition and finding the feed so good he decided ao remain a few days and let them recruit up. Here he found a small, beautiful, basin with large fir trees scattered through it, a small branch, threaded with alder brush along its banks, wended its way through it and into the Gallatin river. There were also many large rocks

scattered here and there, as they had rolled from the rocky cliffs beyond the bench-like hills.

Mathew had just kindled a fire beside a large pine stump, when he heard a low groaning. His horse also heard it and raised his head and snorted. Our hero looked and listened but all was quiet, except the horses biting off the tender bunch-grass around the campfire, and he went to work cooking his supper of dried venison, buffalo meat, and some berries which he had dried the fall before. As he was sitting down to his repast, he heard the strange noise again, but not so plainly as before, but when he was partly through eating, he heard it more distinctly than ever, and Mathew thought "Can it be possible that it is a human being? It sounded so much like the groaning of one and yet it is hardly possible." At any rate he was determined to find out. He picked up his rifle, and, seeing it was well loaded he started out in the dim moonlight, as the moon was partly obscured by passing clouds.

Mathew had gone but a little way when he heard the groaning nearer and more plainly than before, and then he thought perhaps it might be something trying to lure him away from the blazing fire and he hesitated as to going farther. Once more a long groaning was heard and more distinctly than ever. "I am almost certain" said he to himself, "that is some human being," and he stepped carefully on about fifty yards further when he was much startled to see only a few feet from him, a large wooly animal lying down, and hearing a low short breathing, Mathew raised his gun to fire, but as the hammer of it went click, click, he was greatly surprised to hear the words, in broken English, "Don't shoot, me good Injun." A closer inspection in the dim moonlight revealed a large bear lying by his side, and the Indian continued "Me kill bear, bear kill Injun, most." Mathew quickly went to his assistance

and found the poor fellow quite badly hurt, and bleeding badly. He set to work dressing his wounds the best he could, and soon stopped the bleeding. Indeed it seemed good to Mathew to hear a human voice once more, although that of a poor Indian, and he tenderly cared for him the best he knew how. After he had fixed the poor fellow up and made him as comfortable as possible, he moved the rest of his camping outfit down to a big dry log close by, and kindled a fire, made some broth from the dried venison and gave it to him. The Indian ate a little of it, and soon went off to sleep. Mathew sat up with the poor Indian, and cared for him as though he were a brother until morning. He not only felt it his duty, but was glad to have come across him, for possibly he might give him some knowledge or clue that would lead or aid him to the object of his quest. Two or three times during the night our hero heard him say in his sleep, "Good white man. Good white man," and at times he was quite flighty, sometimes apparently trying to free himself from some antagonist. He did not wake until long after Mathew had had his breakfast the next morning, but seemed to feel very much better when he gave him his breakfast. It refreshed him considerably and he got up and tried to hobble about some, but it seemed to make him faint. He apparently felt very grateful to Mathew for his kindness, and said: "You good white man. You save poor Injun's life," and later in the day, when he was feeling better and more able to talk, he told him how he had trailed the old bear, with six cubs, and killed them, one by one, until finally he had killed all but the old bear, and being close to her he shot, but only wounded her, and she turned on him and in the fight almost killed him, but he finally succeeded in thrusting his knife into a vital part. The next day the Indian seemed better, and improved nicely from day to day under Mathew's

careful attention, and he talked more freely and from him our hero received some most useful and encouraging information. He learned that the Indian had come from Idaho, but had roamed over a great deal of the mountain country and had as near as Mathew could make out, for some reason or other, been a wanderer from his tribe. Mathew asked him if he had ever seen white people with any of the tribes of Indians. He said "No," as he shook his head in the negative. He seemed to be in a study for a moment, and then said: "Injun see white woman." "When did Injun see white woman?" asked Matthew, with more interest. "Many moons," at the same time holding up all his fingers, and then crossing the one hand with the other. Mathew reckoned the time to be twelve or fifteen months, perhaps.

"Where did Injun see white woman?" asked Mathew.

He again studied a moment, and pointing in a northerly direction, said, "Way, way."

"How far off to where Injun saw 'white woman?'" asked Mathew.

And he said with a wave of his hand, "Big Muddy way."

"Did Injun see white woman in mountains?" Mathew asked.

He nodded his head in the affirmative, and said, "Heap big mountains, way high," as he raised his hand as high as he could.

"What tribe white woman with?" asked Matthew.

"Him with Big Nez Perces."

"Does Injun belong to Nez Perces?" asked Mathew.

"Me Bannock," he answered.

Again our hero asked, "Are the Bannocks and Nez Perces friends?"

He shrugged his shoulders, and then grunted as though

some of his wounds were hurting him, and said, "Heap big Nez Perces. Bannock him fraid."

Mathew again asked him if it was far to where he saw the white woman.

Again the Indian answered, with a wave of the hand and pointing in a northerly direction, "Way over Big Muddy, heap high."

Mathew now felt pretty well satisfied that the Indian meant what he said.

The Indian then asked, "White woman yo' squaw?"

"No. She may be my friend," answered Mathew. He continued "Wont Injun go with white man and help get white woman?"

"Yes, Injun him go, show white man heap gold, too. White man him heap good, him save poor Injun's life," and he patted Mathew on the shoulder.

Mathew's heart beat high with hope. Could it be possible that this was Lillian, he thought; and yet, what about the auburn curls in that lonely wigwam? He pondered over the matter until the next day, when he thought of a question which might, perhaps, give him a better idea and he asked: "White woman have black hair, like Injun?"

He laughed and shook his head in the negative, then rubbed his fingers down over his cheeks, saying, "White woman him color hair—long."

Mathew now felt quite certain that it was Lillian whom the Indian had seen. Still, he thought, many things might have happened since then, and though she yet be alive, what danger and trouble he might have in trying to rescue her; but Mathew cared not for the hardships and dangers if it were only Lillian. He removed the hide from the large bear and partially tanned it, according to the Indian's instructions, making it a nice addition to his bedding. He still took the best care of the Indian that he could, and

he seemed to be improving day by day, and Mathew began to think that it would be only a few days until they would be able to start on their journey. Mathew was getting very anxious to start on the journey again, as he now felt certain that he at last had the right clue, and really felt sorry for the way he had accused the poor old Indian of having murdered Lillian. He now began to feel elated over the idea that he would also have an ally in the Indian, who perhaps would be of great advantage to him, in helping to rescue the girl if they found her; but now the sunshine was shadowed, for that very night there came up a heavy rain and hail storm, and Mathew and the Indian got soaking wet. From this the poor Indian caught a severe cold and he suddenly began to grow worse in spite of Mathew's best endeavors, and two days after he passed away. His last words were, with a smile on his lips, and looking up into Mathew's face as he kindly bent over him in silent prayer: "Good white man. Meet poor Injun in happy hu-n-t-i-n-g" and he was no more, and as Mathew gazed upon the dead body of that red man, he thought to himself,

"The battle is ended; the hero goes
Worn and scarred to his last repose.
He has won the day, he has conquered doom,
He has sunk—unknown, to his nameless tomb."

Mathew now felt more solitary than ever before in his life. He dug the grave and quietly laid the poor Indian down in it to rest, and, as he slowly piled the stones over the grave, he could not help his tears mingling with them.

He, now so lonely and sad, began making preparations to resume his journey on the morrow. He had buried all the belongings of the Indian with the body, except the knife which he used in killing the bear. It was rather a large butcher knife, pointed, like a dirk, but in the tussle

with the bear the point was broken off, and this he felt as though he ought to keep as a reminiscence.

'Twas about 8 o'clock on the twenty-seventh day of May when Mathew, for the last time, gazed upon the lonely grave of his rude brother and started on his weary journey down the Gallatin river.

His horses had recruited up so they were in very good condition for traveling, but, owing to the uncertainty of the route and knowing too that at any time he might encounter a band of Indians (which he now wished to avoid as much as possible), he traveled very slowly and cautiously. He passed through rocky and deep canyons and many curious sights met his gaze. In one deep coulee, at the head of a gulch, Mathew counted about thirty buffalo carcasses jammed and crowded over one another. He surmised that the buffalo had been driven in there by some of the severe storms during the previous winter and the snow blowing and drifting in such a way that it made an impenetrable barrier against them, and they were forced to stay and perish in the cold and snow. In another gulch, one day, he noticed two mountain sheep heads with the big horns interlocked and hanging over a large fir limb some twenty feet from the ground. Part of the vertebraes were still connected with the heads. In looking at them with the field-glass, Mathew noticed that the horns perfectly interlocked and caught on the limb which had partially grown over them. Mathew finally came to the conclusion that sometime, when the gulch was full of snow, two sheep had met there and getting their horns interlocked and perhaps so near exhausted that they could not free themselves either from the limb or each other, had died in that position and when the snow melted away it left them suspended in the air. This of course was only his conclusion but it is more than likely a correct one. In another place, on the very

top of an almost perpendicular cliff, very high in the air, he noticed a rock the very shape of a lion crouched upon the stone. The nose, eyes, ears and breast, in fact the whole form, was almost as perfect as a living lion.

He had no little difficulty in some of the canyons, sometimes coming to a place where the high bluffs came close up to the water's edge and he would have to cross and recross in many places and it was very difficult and dangerous as the breaking up of winter caused the river to be very much swollen. Sometimes large cakes of ice and other drift would go down the swift current dashing, and plunging, and only those who have seen the swift mountain streams can fully realize that it was a perilous undertaking. After traveling thus for several days he at length came out into the main Gallatin valley. He had not yet met with any Indians, but had crossed several of their trails and passed by a few of their smouldering fires. He was delighted with the valley, its grand expase of country with beautiful streams meandering through it like silvery threads making it a veritable paradise for the redmen and the buffalo. The streams were skirted along in places with small cottonwood groves, alder brush and willows, and game was plentiful everywhere. Mathew became more and more watchful and wary, not knowing at what time he might encounter some of the savages.

There were a few men who had married squaws (squaw men commonly called) living scattered here and there along some of the creeks, but he was not at that time aware of it. In some way he had lost his compass, which made it more difficult to travel in the right direction, and one day during a very hard shower of rain he became somewhat bewildered and instead of going northward he bore off very much to the westward. Thus he journeyed along until he came to where three rivers united, and he felt certain that was the head of the great Missouri river.

CHAPTER IX.

A strange companion. The old man's story. Matthew's journey resumed.

Mathew knew at once that he had gone entirely too far to the westward, for his chart showed that these three rivers, the Gallatin, Madison and Jefferson, formed the Missouri river, and he was really surprised to find that he had gone so far out of his way, and more surprised when he came up to a log cabin before he hardly knew he was near it, and was accosted by a rather pleasant spoken but dirty looking man perhaps sixty years old. It was near camping time and Mathew asked him the privilege of camping in the grove by which his cabin was nearly surrounded. He gave his consent, and Mathew was turning to a nice place to camp, when the cabin door once more opened, and quite a tall Indian squaw with two children made their appearance. As he began unpacking his horse the old man came up and began asking questions, where he had come from and so on. He told him that he had come down the Gallatin river from the mountains on his way to the north, but had wandered far out of the way, but gave him no idea as to the object of his trip. Mathew asked the old man concerning the Indians and his safety, and was assured by him that as long as he remained there, both he and his property would not be molested, and for which Mathew indeed felt very thankful, for he was quite tired out from his long watchfulness, and he thought now to get a good night's rest. He made his bed down soon after supper and retired for the night. He slept very soundly, scarcely awaking until the sun was peeping over the Bridger mountains some fifty miles away. While he was cooking his rude meal the old man came out to his camp bringing some corn meal and

offered it to him, which was very gratfully received for Mathew had used his last several days before and had missed it greatly. He did not feel rested sufficiently that he wanted to travel that day and asked the old man for permission to remain louger and he readily granted it, and as Mathew looked at him he thought to himself, that man has seen brighter days, he has a history which I would like to know. He changed his horses to better pasture and when he came back to camp there sat the old man and two children about six and eight years old perhaps. "Are these your children?" Mathew asked. The old man said they were as he looked at them.

"I suppose you have been here a long time" said Mathew. "Yes" he replied as he looked away in the distance. Then Mathew asked all about the country, the Indian tribes and many other things and for all his questions and answers to them, was fully satisfied that Lillian was not in that part of the country. He also told Mathew about other squaw men in the valley and told him a great many more things of much interest to him. He also asked Mathew a great many questions and he told him the story of Lillian's disappearance, his travels, about the lone Indian in the park, also about the poor Indian whom he had laid to rest far up in the mountains and also the clue. He also told him the vow which he had made several years before. The old man looked at him and said "Well you are a brave and noble hearted boy, I hope God will crown your efforts with success and that some day you will be a prosperous and happy man." "This old man" said he as he cast a sad look at himself "was once a hopeful and happy man, but," and then paused as if waiting to be asked a question. Mathew looking him in the face remarked. "I believe you sir and would sincerly like to know your history." The old man seemed to feel sad as he again looked at the children

who were playing in the sand at his feet and said, "Well I will give it to you," and he began:

"The old man's story."—"Many years ago, way back in the Mississippi valley, I married a young and charming wife. She was loving and kind and we lived very happy together. By-and-by a little girl baby came to our house—a dear sweet little creature—and we both thought every thing of her. As time went by, wife and I were both converted to the Mormon faith, and were persuaded to immigrate with a company of Mormons, who were then making preparations to go to Utah. We considered the matter and finally went with them. I was a poor but honest hard working man, and it took all we had to get to the promised land, (Utah.) We had a long and dangerous journey across the plains. Many of us sometimes were sick and nearly starving, but we thought it was in a good cause and journeyed on without lamenting,except over the graves of a few whom we left by the wayside. The plains were then al-almost covered with Indians, and a few times we narowly escaped with our lives but finally reached the promised land, and were welcomed into Salt Lake City by Brigham Young and other Mormons. I worked hard and as time rolled on I buiit a nice and comfortable house, and was saving up money with which to engage in business. No man was happier than I with my wife and darling little girl who was now nearly nine years old. One day while I was about my work I was approached by Brigham Young who said to me; 'Mr—— I have had a revelation, and you must give up your wife to me.' I was so astonished that it was impossible to utter a single word for a few minutes; I burst into tears and said, I can't, I can't. The prophet hesitated a few minutes and then said, 'a true revelation, you must give her up.' Then I was almost beyond control, and with all the anger within me exclaimed, 'I can

not, I will not!' He stood for a moment and then slowly walked away and said no more, I thought to myself, can it be possible? No! No! It can not be! Two days later my work called me to the mountains several miles distant, when I returned about six o'clock in the evening, my dear wife and child were gone. I waited, thinking perhaps they were out at some of the neighbors for an hour, but they did not return. I then looked for the money (about sixteen hundred dollars) which I always left in her charge and that was gone, I then looked around thinking perhaps she might have left a note or some explanation, but not even a note or even a trace of them could I find. Their best clothing was all gone too. I enquired of the neighbors and hunted for them but no trace or clue could I get of their whereabouts, except that one little boy told me that he saw a covered vehicle drive up to the house and stop before the door. I was wild as I walked along the streets from door to door. For months I roamed the streets in search of them, and went to the different Mormon colonies, but all of no avail. I almost became distracted. For a long time I continued to roam over the mountains alone and with the Indian tribes. Then I went to the gold fields in California, thinking perhaps to, partly at least alleviate my trouble; but silver and gold had no charms for me, and I again went back and wandered through the streets and down to that desolate home, but oh! I could not bear to look at it.

At last I traveled back to the old homestead where the most of my boyhood days were spent. As I neared the dear old place where I went to school, the school house was gone and nothing remained but the stone foundation in the corner of the field; but my memory drifted back to my early school days when I was but a jolly boy, and the old spring on the hillside where Tommy and I used to go after water had dried up and thistles were growing there. I went on

a mile farther past several of the neighbor's homesteads, but there were strange faces everywhere. There was no one I knew and I was a stranger in the land. I wandered on to the brookside and cast a look at the dear old house on the hill. Did I say house? No, it was gone and the place where it once stood was all covered with thorns and weeds higher than my head. Surely I thought the dear old well with its mossy curbing is in there. I ascended the hill step by step dividing the weeds and briars with my hands. At length I stumbled over something, the old door step. Yes, yes it was the old stone step which my father had once put there when I was but a small boy, and Oh! how sad I felt to call back to memory scenes of so long ago, and I thought here is where my aged father died, my youngest brother was born, my brothers departed to and returned from helping to fight the great battles of the rebellion, and later when they outfitted to cross the plains to the far west. Indeed it was a home, a home for all. I passed on to the old well, but it was now dry. The moss had decayed and fallen off. and nothing was left but the the bare cold stone to mark the place. I passed on through the old grove and orchard with their broken and mossy trees, and on over the garden wall to that dear old spot where my mother used to have her flowers, and there to my great suprise found amongst the weeds the morning glories blooming just the same as they were in my childhood days. It seemed to me that they had been growing all these years waiting for us to some back, with tearful eyes. I plucked some of them together with some wild flowers close by and pressed them in this little cabinet (and at the same time the poor old man took it from his inside pocket and handed it to Mathew, who noticed that the flowers were in a perfect state of preservation.) The pretty lilac bushes that were in the front yard had grown up large, but seemed to be like my-

self, low down on the shady side of life. I next wandered along the brooklet and through the timber where there used to be so much game which I hunted when a boy. There still were the old birds and squirrels' nests but not a living object did I see. I thought then to go to the north part of the field (which was higher ground) that I could once more behold the beautiful farms that I had once been so familiar with, and perchance see some of my old schoolmates even at a distance, but as I leaned on the old toppling gate and looked, everything had changed, and there was not a living object of any description which came to my view. They were all gone. I felt so sad and lonely as I went back to the silent spot on the hill, and once more and for the last time, stood on that "dear old stone door step."

Sadder than ever I came back to the mountains and in disguise wandered through the different Mormon colonies, and at last once more through the streets of Salt Lake City, but all of no avail. I thought then to go to the school play grounds at noon time. Yes Cora was there. I called Cora? She looked up at me and went away playing with the other girls. I said, 'I will go away, throw off my disguise, and then she will know me.' When school was out I was there, and said as she started home 'Cora! don't you know me? Your papa.' She looked at me as one frightened, (four years had changed my black hair to gray) and ran on. My poor heart was broken, and I sank upon the ground. Two days later I found myself in an Indian camp several miles away. I gave up in despair of ever seeing my dear wife and daughter again, and cared but little what became of me. I wandered through the mountains alone and with different tribes of Indians, and finally settled down here with this Indian woman as you see." He continued. "I hope God will forgive the man who so cruelly wronged me." And then said. "I know of untold

wealth in the mountains, but I care not for it, it can not make me happy. "Well my old friend," said Mathew, "your history has been of great interest to me, though a very sad one, I trust that in a better land all things will be righted, and that some day you will be happy.

"Put gloom and sadness far away
And smiling bid goodbye to sorrow.
The clouds that shroud your brow today
Will let the sunshine in tomorrow."

Mathew had been in camp nearly a week now and was well rested. The Indians had come around the camp several times, but did not molest anything belonging to him and he now made preparations for resuming his journey. The old man seemed to feel sorry that he was going to leave him, and as he clasped his hand, he said, "Goodbye my dear boy, I trust that success may crown your efforts and that someday we will meet beyond the river in that happy land."

Mathew now started on his way, following the foothills according to the way he had been instructed to go in order to strike a pass through the mountains. The old man had also given him a sign that in case he came in contact with Indians in the valley they would not molest him, Mathew had also received a great deal of useful information in regard to the country and other things which he was very glad to know, and it helped him a great deal. He also received a sack of cornmeal from the old man which was highly appreciated. It was now the latter part of July and quite warm weather, and he thought it better not to travel too fast although his anxiety would hurry him on much faster, and on July twentieth he reached the foot of the mountains at the entrance to the pass to which he had been directed. It was evening time now and he took up camp. This camping place reminded him so much of familiar scenery on the Yellowstone that his mind drifted back more

forcibly than for a long time before, and through the night he dreamed of home and friends and with a mind less determined he might have been tempted to give up his quest in despair, but he felt that his life would hardly be worth living if he were not successful in finding Lillian, for while he was satisfied that the Indian had told him the truth about seeing the white woman, and that the woman was Lillian, so many things could happen in a year's time.

Mathew had not been feeling well for a few days or he would not possibly have gotten discouraged so soon after leaving the camp with the old man; but, undaunted he pressed onward. The pass in the mountains was quite an available one in going from the lower part of the Gallatin valley to the upper Shields river and Mussleshell country; therefore the trail was a well-beaten one. One place in the canyon the high rocky cliffs came down to the water's edge of a shallow stream, and one going through had to travel up the creek bed for a considerable distance, and to leave it, had to turn and go up through a crevice in the rock about six feet wide and then wind around the mountain side.

Mathew had ridden perhaps one-third of the way to the top of the mountain, when he heard a faint rumbling sound like that of distant thunder. He looked about to see what it might be. The sound seemed to be coming nearer and from the top of the range ahead of him. Not being able to discover what it was, he hastily turned to one side of the trail into a thick patch of timber to await the outcome. The sound still came nearer and nearer; soon a great cloud of dust began to ascend skyward.

CHAPTER X.

Lillian and Lewanna's discovery of a beautiful cave in the mountains. Lillian's sicknes. A dream of home.

One bright morning in June Lillian and Lewanna started out for a ramble through a portion of the mountains in which they had never been. They had gone many miles up a gulch before they were hardly aware of it, being attracted along by the numerous wild flowers, the beautiful strange scenery and the many wild animals feeding or resting upon the sides ot the mountains, the mountain sheep high upon the rocky cliffs and the fleet antelope bounding up before them.

And it was long after noon before they thought to eat their lunch which they had brought with them. They were hardly through eating however when there came up a cold rain and hail storm during which they grew bewildered and lost their way and could not tell which way to go to get back to the camp. They traveled on through the terrible storm with the hope that they would reach camp before darkness came on. At last they noticed a big hole up in the side of the mountain across the gulch. They at once made for it to get shelter, as the large hail stones were fast falling upon them, and by the time they had reached the cave they were literally drenched with the chilly rain. They sat down in the mouth of the cave and waited for the storm to abate. They became so cold and numb that they could scarcely move and at last gathered up some dead limbs and bark from the scrub trees near by and built a fire. It was almost dark and still stormy, the hail then being nearly a foot deep, and they well knew that it was almost certain death to try to reach camp that night. After they had gotten warm by the fire, they thought to fix up

some torches and go back into the cave a little way. They had already satisfied themselve that it was not inhabited by wild beasts, as there were no signs or indications of it.

The entrance of the cave was quite large but back a little not so large but that they had to stoop a little. This opened into a spacious room with cold solid rock on each side and overhead, while the bottom or floor seemed to be of a more soft foundation, yet not soft enough that walking upon it would make an impression. But in two or three places they noticed the plain prints of an Indian moccasin. The room at last narrowed down much smaller and they passed on into a much smaller one but more lengthy, the floor of which was very uneven, sometimes two or three steps upward or downward. There were a few crystals hanging to the walls scattered around here and there, also a few beautiful stalactites suspended from the ceiling in different places. Their curiosity led them on and on through the zigzag cavern, from room to room, some larger than others with many curiosities and some of which were much more interesting than others. At last they came to a larger room than any which they had passed through, at the farther end of which stood a very large grey granite rock with crystalized streaks through it from top to bottom. It was somewhat tapering at the top, which reached to almost the ceiling. At its base, and between it and a smaller room several feet away, was a small pool of dark blue water. The small room beyond the pool was a few feet higher than the one where the pool was and its beauty could only be seen as they stepped to one side of the huge rock which was directly in front of it. The room was full of the most beautiful crystals and stalactites that perhaps human eyes ever witness in the Rocky mountains. All the different colored crystals and stalactites, most of which extended from the low ceiling to the floor, some part way while

others started at the floor and rose up half or a third of the way to the ceiling. Water was dripping off of some of them and draining off into the pool below. The room was so filled up with the formation that they could not enter it and could only stand and gaze at it in wonder. The girls looked at it until a late hour and, tired out, they went back to the smouldering fire at the entrance with a promise that they would sometime visit it again.

When morning dawned it was bright and clear and they soon found the way they wanted to go, but it took them several hours to get back to camp as it was much farther away than they anticipated. Lillian, who had not been feeling well since that night, finally succumbed to a hard spell of sickness. "Poor girl," Lewanna thought as she smoothed back Lillian's curly hair from her forehead with her hand. Lillian had now been sick for nearly a week and was yet no better. Lewanna took the best care of her that she knew how, and while the poor girl was sick she thought of home and friends more than she had for a long time. In her delirious dreams she talked to her mother as though she were by her side and frequently asked to see Mathew, Bessie or her father. Lewanna in her heart pitied Lillian, for she had told her all about her home and friends. Under Lewanna's careful attention Lillian, by the next week, was much better and in a month she was quite strong again.

CHAPTER XI.

The band of buffalo and Indians. Mathew's journey northward. Evidence of Lillian's captivity. In the clutches of the robbers. A strange dream.

Mathew stood anxiously waiting the outcome of the strange rumbling noise. Now an unearthly bellowiug began to thrill the air with all the force imaginable. A few moments more, and hundreds of buffalo came dashing, charging, and madly rushing down the mountain side. It was indeed a majestic sight, as they passed by him, some distance away, and to Mathew's surprise, a band of several Indians followed them on their cayuse ponies; yelling and whooping. They were no doubt driving their game from an enemy's range, and were so elated over their success, that they did not discover him, and after they had passed on out of sight and hearing Mathew resumed his journey, and finally reached the summit of the mountains at camping time. He was always so cautious, that in camping for the night he would leave the trail for a considerable distance. During the night he was awakened by a cry or scream of some wild beast, which he thought to be a panther, and not caring to be attacked by one in the dark, he quickly built up the smouldering fire, which had nearly gone out, knowing that most wild animals were afraid of it. He kept up a blazing fire until morning, when he noticed a well-beaten path some thirty yards distance, where the mountain lion, as he could tell by its track, had walked round and round him many times, but was probably afraid to approach nearer the blazing fire. He indeed felt thankful that he had avoided a night attack from the savage animal.

From the mountain heights, where Mathew was camping, the scenery was grand almost beyond description. To the

westward, several thonsand feet below, lay the beautiful Gallatin valley, surrounded by foothills, low mountain ranges and snow capped peaks reaching skyward, while a few scattering clouds, several hundred feet below him, were slowly passing over the valley, some of which were sending down the gentle rain drops on the nutritious bunch grass.

To the east lay the Shields river country, a magnificent little valley, one or two miles wide perhaps, with foothills on either side, gradually ascending back to the mountains, and beyond were the old Crazy mountains, towering high in the air, and partially covered with snow. To the north, at some distance, was the wild Musselshell and Judith river country, with its grassy hills and barren peaks, and away beyond was the old Missouri river, boiling and foaming, winding its way through the sand and sage brush country, and still beyond, the high peaks of the Bear Paw mountains, covered with snow, reminding one of the northern icebergs, while to the south and southeast, many miles, might be seen the famous Yellowstone river, winding its way through rocky canyons, and down through beautiful valleys, with adjacent foothills extending back to the mountains.

In all it was indeed an interesting view to Mathew, as he in fact had seen and recognized the mountain peaks only a few miles from his old home, which he had left nearly a year ago and it is easier to imagine his feelings than to describe them, but he is now on his journey descending the mountains on the east side, following down a beautiful clear stream, which headed only a short distance from where he had camped.

For several days Mathew journeyed on without much of interest happening. At length he crossed the low range of mountains dividing the Shields from the Smith and Musselshell river countries, and he was now descending a swift

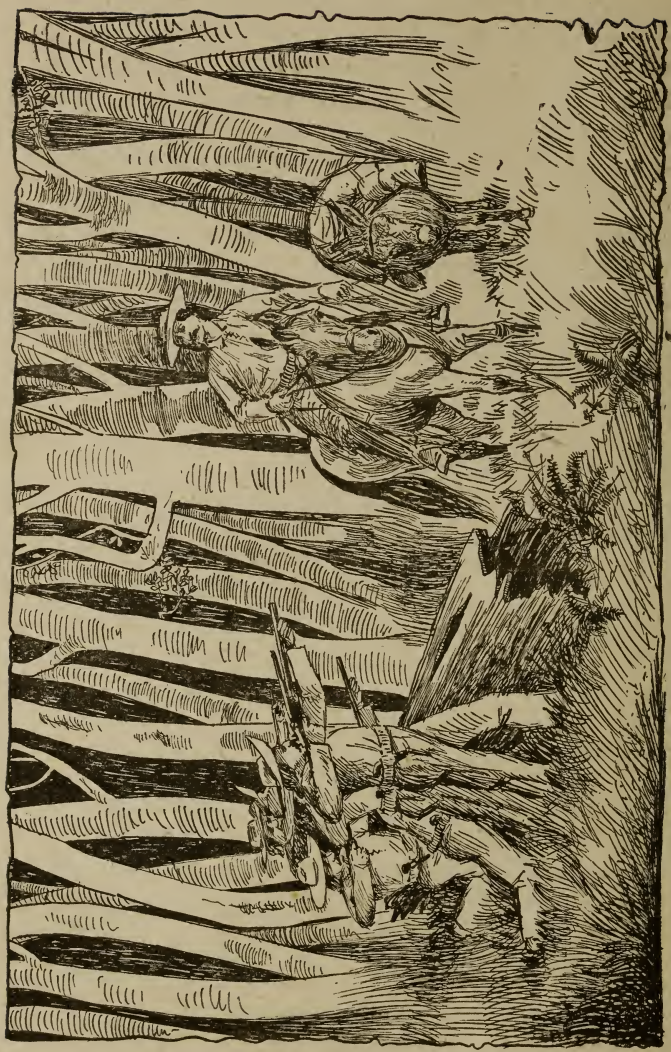
mountain stream northward. At noontime he stopped for his usual meal. There was a spring close by which seemed to boil out from under a great rock, which partially overhung the pool. The water cress grew in abundance all about, and the young ferns and wild flowers made it very picturesque. The rock was peculiar in shape, a part of it rising in a shaft or column, while the base was broad and the whole had the appearance of a great monument of limestone. At the top of the rock a fish hawk had its nest and from the appearance, the hawks before it for many generations had used it for this purpose, by the number of nests, one on top of the other. The place also had the appearance of being used as a camping place before, as there were some blackened stones piled around and some charcoal. Mathew also noticed where there had been a little chopping done on several small trees, years before. Therefore the place had a peculiar interest for him on that account, as well as for the beauty and picturesqueness. The high rocky cliffs a little way back on each side of the creek made it seem more wild and lonely. After he had eaten his dinner, he was looking about the old rock, and happened to notice some marks of some kind scratched on it, which he began to examine with great interest. Time and the weather had partly obliterated a portion of the inscription, but he at last found a clue or way mark that brought new hope and courage, for there appeared as plain as could be, the initials "L. A. M. B." He traced these letters out with his knife, and he knew it could be none other than Lillian's work. There was a date also, but he could not quite make it out. He was at least standing in the place in which she had stood, and as he gazed at those letters, his mind reverted back to the old spring by the "Lamb Tree," and his eyes filled with tears as he thought of the cruel hardships she must have gone through in all these years

with the savages. Mathew was now more determined than ever to search until he found her, for somehow he now felt certain he would be able to do so. He now started on his journey with more zeal and courage than ever, traveling through the Musselshell country. There was plenty of game everywhere, but only a few Indians were seen, and fortunately they were off at a long distance. He had to use the greatest precaution traveling through this part of the country, as he had no compass by which to guide himself, and he was going across the country, through deep gulches and over long ridges of baren hills, instead of following the water courses as he had usually been doing, for the reason that this part of the country sloped more to the east and northeast, while he wished to go almost due north, or possibly a little northwest. The weather now was not hot, but dry, and under almost any other circumstances he would have enjoyed the journey very much.

One day, while he was crossing a dry creek, his horse sunk down with him about six feet, the ground giving way as the horse put his full weight on it. The animal did not strnggle much as he had been through so many snow drifts at different times. Mathew sprang to the solid bank in safety, and worked hard, digging it off and letting it roll down into the hole to fill it up, and at last got him out all right.

Mathew found that he had gone entirely too far eastward and turned his course more to the northwest and crossed the Little Belt range of mountains, then down the Judith river. At length, on the twenty-second day of August, Mathew reached the "Big Muddy," or Missouri river, or rather came in sight of it, it being about one half mile away, and as the sun was going down, he turned into a patch of cottonwood timber to camp for the night, and as he did so he reflected how fortunate he had been so far on his journey.

However he had gone but a few rods into the timber, when he suddenly came upon a horse, with saddle and bridle on it, tied to a tree. He at first felt glad that he had done so, thinking, perhaps, thst it belonged to some hunter or prospector, and he had felt lonely all day. But alas for his hopes, for, in looking around a little more, he beheld several other horses, tied in the same way. Apprehensive fear at once crept into his heart and he wished he had went on to the river bank to camp, as he at first thought of doing, and was about to turn to leave, when to his dismay he found himself surrounded by a band of very rough looking men, six in number, with as many carbines pointing directly at his head.



IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE ROBBERS.

He was ordered to dismount. He soon recovered his self possession and did as he was bidden, knowing it was useless to resist so many.

"We will teach you how to follow stage robbers, you infernal detective," said the leader of the gang. "You thought to entrap six strong men. We have you in our clutches now," and then he added, "Have you anything to say before you die? If you have you had better say it quickly."

Many strange things happen in this world, for only two nights before Mrs. Bently dreamed of Mathew. It was the first time for a long while, although he was almost continually in her mind and although they had never heard of him since he had left home, yet they somehow felt as though he was all right until the dream, which made them very uneasy, still they mourned his absence a great deal and sometimes almost gave up in despair of his ever returning.

"What makes you so melancholy this morning," said Mr. Bently to his wife at the breakfast table?

"Well, husband, I had a dream about our dear boy last night, which somehow weighs heavily on my mind all morning."

"What was it wife," asked Mr. Bently, somewhat agitated?

"Well, I saw him just as plainly and he looked as natural as the day he left us, except that he was very pale and trembling as he was being led away, but I could not tell just where he was. He had a chain of some kind on his leg and I heard him say 'I am innocent.' His voice was so natural and plain that it woke me up. I turned over in bed and listened but everything was as quiet as could be. For a long time I could not go to sleep, but finally dozed off

again and dreamed the same thing over again and once more heard those same words, "I am innocent." It woke me up again but I could not tell what it meant."

"That is very strange," said Mr. Bently, very deeply concerned. "I am afraid something very serious has happened him."

"Oh, I wish he had never gone away," said Mrs. Bently with tears in her eyes.

The more they thought and talked about it the more anxious they became but Mr. Bently, although feeling very serious himself, tried to console his wife by saying, "It may be he is coming home."

"No, no, I cannot think so from my dream," said Mrs. Bently. "Yet it might be possible; but if we do not see or hear from him in a day or two I shall believe that we will never see him again. My dear Mathew; oh, where are you?"

Of course the dream was told to Mr. Ainsley who thought it quite strange but could only hope that it meant nothing serious. The days rolled slowly by and nothing was heard of him. Some two weeks later Mr. Bently went to the fort for his mail and some supplies and while there happened to pick up a Helena paper giving a long account of a bold and daring robbery of the Helena and Ft. Benton stage coach, and that the robbers had got away with a large amount of money; and later in the same paper that the coach robbers had been captured by a detachment of cavalry, also giving the names of the robbers and among them was M. Bently.

"Can it be that my dear, my only son, has turned out to be a robber," muttered Mr. Bently as the tears trickled down his cheeks. "Would to God he had died when a child."

When he got home he took the paper slowly from his

pocket and with a trembling hand, handed it to his wife, who already noticed him looking so heart broken, and as she read it over she exclaimed in deepest sorrow "Thank heaven, I know from my dream that our own dear boy is innocent." And then she exclaimed, "Oh, why are we so tried?" In the evening they took the paper over to Mr. Ainsley, who read it with a sorrowing heart. Yet the consoling words from Mr. Ainsley seem to partially alleviate the crushed hearts of his parents.

"Oh, it does seem as though we have all had so much trouble since we came to Montana," cried Mrs. Bently. "I do wish we had never came here," and then she sobbed out "Our darling boy is not guilty,"

CHAPTER XII.

Mathew a prisoner. His escape. Helpless and alone in the mountains to die. Found and saved by Lillian and Lewanna.

Mathew, in a firm and brave tone, said "Gentlemen, you are mistaken in your man, I am not a detective but am searching for a poor girl who was stolen away from her home nearly seven years ago by the Indians.

"What nonsense," exclaimed one of the band.

"True as I live," said Mathew, and he told them all about it in such a straightforward manner that they began to doubt his being a detective as they at first thought, and he told them the clue which he had gotten from the Indian and also the initials which he had found cut on the large limestone rock.

"I remember of seeing those letters somewhere," said one of the gang.

They now began to believe him, but they had much at stake, for they had robbed the stage which was running from Helena to Ft. Benton and had secured a large amount

of money. They held consultation as to what they should do with Mathew and concluded that he would at least have to remain with them for the present.

In the meantime a detachment of cavalry had been sent out from the fort in pursuit of the robbers. They tracked them across the Missouri river and down the valley, then off into the foothills, and then they lost their trail and probably would have passed them by had it not been for Mathew's mule, which had broken its rope during the night and wondered out on the hill a little way off. They rode up to it and found that it had either been ridden or used for carrying a pack. Cautiously they went to investigate the vicinity and finally found the tracks where the horsemen had entered the grove, and after some reconoitering the soldiers located them in a small opening in the heart of the little grove and rode in upon them entirely unawares, as they were just eating their breakfast. They were at once ordered, with twelve guns pointing at their heads, to throw up their hands, which they did without any hesitation. They were soon all handcuffed and shackled. Mathew was the last one to go through the ordeal and he told his story (in short) to the soldiers. Some were willing to believe him while others were not. At last he tried to prove his innocence by the robbers, who by the way had decided that he was a detective and had marked the way which led to their capture and would say nothing, but only looked at him with a scowl. The soldiers said that he would at least have to be taken to the fort and stand a trial the same as the rest. They were not prepared with handcuffs for him but had a shackle with which they chained him to the saddle. Mathew's heart sank, for he well knew that if he was taken back he would be executed with the robbers as one of them, and he thought to himself, "What shall I do? God knows that I am innocent." He breathed

a silent prayer to God for deliverance, and now he determined to make a bold break for liberty if the opportunity was offered.

They were riding almost parallel with the river, and Mathew was riding on the side next to the river. His horse seemed a very mettlesome animal, and taking advantage of this as a ruse, he caused him to get out of line several times, and one time he got so far away from the gang that he thought it a good chance to make a break. Suddenly he put spurs to his horse and started toward the river with all the power within him. Two of the soldiers started in pursuit and hallooing at him to halt, but he had such a start of them, and being on a swifter horse, that he soon reached the river bank and plunged into the water. The soldiers fired at him several times, but the bullets whizzed harmlessly over his head. The last firing was just as he was going up the bank and into the brush on the opposite side of the river. The two soldiers now abandoned the chase and returned to the company, lest there might be trouble with the other captives, who were taken to the fort, tried, and executed, which was the end of one of the most daring band of robbers who ever operated in Moutana.

Mathew felt very thankful that he was now free even though he should perish in the mountains, rather than be taken and disgraced by being classed as one of the robbers.

Yes, he was free, but with the shackle on his left foot. His bedding, camping outfit and everything else were gone except the old broken knife, which he had reserved as a memento when he buried the poor, rude brother iu the mountains. He would not have had it, but it happened to be in his saddle bags on his saddle. He got very wet in crossing the river, in fact if his horse had not been a splendid swimmer he pobably would never have reached the opposite shore of that treacherous stream. As it happened,

he had three matches in his vest pocket, and they were a little damp, but he managed with the last one of them to get a fire started and keeping his eyes on the cavalry troop, until they were well out of sight, dried his clothes. He had first freed himself from the saddle, to which he was chained, by cutting the leather. He did not travel any that day, as he was nearly exhausted from the trouble he had just gone through, neither was he able to get anything to eat, except a few berries in the grove where he was camping. When night came on, it found him without anything more to eat and no bedding, but he made himself as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

The poor boy was indeed in a hard position, having nothing to kill game with, neither could he free himself from the chain and shackle, which so annoyed him in trying to get about. Although he had tried to saw or cut it in two with the old knife many times; but he still had courage, living in hopes that he might possibly see or run across some one who might be able to give him something to eat or help him in some way; but all he was able to get was a few berries, and once in a while a rabbit, which he knocked over with a stone or club. Day by day Mathew grew weaker as he wandered over the foot hills and through the mountains until he became so weak and exhausted that he was tempted to kill his horse for food, and then he would ask himself "How can I do such a thing? No." He said to himself, "I may perish on these bleak hills, but I will not harm my dear horse, who has carried me safely over so long a journey, and carried me safely to freedom," and he again thought of home and friends. Mathew's appetite at last left him and he was so weak that he little noticed where he was going and the horse carrying him as he went slowly on grazing up the gulch. As the horse was ascending out of the creek that wended its way down the gulch,

poor Mathew, unable longer to keep his place in the saddle, fell to the ground, where the poor fellow lay for some time unconscious.

Finally arousing himself enough to crawl to the shade of a large tree, where he lay scarcely thinking, so little strength and courage had he left. It happened on this same day that Lewanna and Lillian were over in the gulch, picking berries, wandering about from bush to bush, rather following the old Indian trail down the gulch.

Lewanna noticed where something had been dragged across the trail and, with the keen curiosity of the Indian, followed it up until she found Mathew. She was very much excited and called to Lillian, saying, "Found pale-face, him dead," and they went together to where he was lying.

It was with strange feelings that Lillian now beheld the first white face she had seen for nearly seven long years. They discovered that he had a chain and shackle on one foot, and were at first startled. They thought he must be dead and then Lillian thought she noticed a slight quiver of the eyelids, and being a brave and noble girl, went to him and lifted his poor head to her lap. Seeing that he had only fainted, she sent Lewanna for some water. After she had bathed his temples with the cool water he partially revived and muttered out some incoherent words, among them was "In-no-ce-nt." Lillian had at first thought he might be some escaped robber, by the shackle on his foot. Seeing that he was very weak, from hunger and exposure, she gently laid his head upon the grass, and went to prepare, as best she could, something from her own luncheon. The girls had brought some dried venison. This she sliced up as fine as possible and with clean stones pounded it fine and moistened it with water.

This she gave him a little at a time until he had begun

to revive more and more. At last he gazed earnestly and surprisedly into her face and said faintly "Lillian."

She was almost frightened, poor girl. She had not heard that name spoken for so long, the Indians calling her Lee. She scarcely could see, so astonished was she, and looked bewildered.

"Lillian, don't you know me, Mathew Bently?" he said faintly.

"Oh, can it be my dear old friend Mathew? It is, it is," and she bent down her head and sobbed for joy.

After her first burst of emotion, she said, "Oh Mathew, how came you here?"

"I was searching for you, dear Lillian, and you have saved my life," he said as he held her hand in his, and then he noticed her glancing down at the chain and shackle, and he said, with tears in his eyes, "Oh, my dear Lillian, I am innocent and sometime I will tell you all."

"Yes dear," she said, "it worries you to talk much now."

When Lillian told Lewanna of her discovery she seemed almost as glad as Lillian herself. They stayed and cared for Mathew until near sundown. He was too exhausted to talk much but the joy at discovering Lillian was better to him than medicine or food. Lillian determined if possible not to let any of the Indians know of their discovery, and as Lewanna had become a Christian and was a staunch friend of Lillian's, it was an easy matter to get her co-operation.

It happened at this time that all the able bodied warriors were off somewhere on one of their raids, and the girls concluded to go to the camp and after the Indians were asleep get some bedding and such other things as they would need for him and come out and care for him through the night, and then return in the morning before the Indians awoke.

As they started to leave him the poor fellow motioned to Lillian as though he was afraid to let her go, but she assured him of her speedy return and he seemed satisfied. She had found his faithful horse grazing a little way off, and brought him near and picketed him out, after removing the saddle, which she brought and laid down at Mathew's side. As the nights were quite cool, Lillian built a fire for him and now with a fond clasp of the hand the girls left him and as soon as expedient returned with the supplies.

For nearly two weeks these two noble girls cared for Mathew. He gained very slowly at first, but more rapidly later on, and during the time they laid plans for escape. Lewanna had within her a noble soul and helped them all she could, although it nearly broke her heart to think of parting with Lillian, yet she determined to be true to her and the right.

These two weeks held much for Lillian and Mathew. There were a great many questions to ask on both sides and when Mathew was strong enough he explained to Lillian how he came to be wearing the shackle. In the meantime, the girls had removed it by breaking the lock in some way, as they had tried several times to cut it in two. Yet the all absorbing question of escape was most on their minds, for they feared the warriors would soon return, and if they did would undoubtedly find out their secret, and if they should they knew not what might be the outcome, as Lewanna heard them say more than once that if Lillian tried to escape they would kill her. Their plans were carefully laid and they decided to start on Wednesday night, it now being Monday evening. The moon then was at its full and was slowly appearing in the eastern horizon when Lillian and Mathew bid Lewanna an affectionate farewell, Lewanna assuring them that she would not reveal anything concerning them.

They felt that their journey would be of great hardships and danger. Matthew's horse was in good condition, and Lewanna was so kind as to let Lillian take her horse and saddle, they being the ones which the warriors had brought to their camp during the summer and given to her. This horse was also in fine shape for the journey. Lillian indeed felt very sad at leaving Lewanna, whom she had learned to love almost as her own sister. Yet when she thought of going home to her dear friends it filled her heart with joy.

"Well, Lillian," said Mathew, after they had been started a little while, "we must make the biggest ride of our journey tonight, for we must cross the Missouri river by daylight tomorrow morning."

"Well, I am sure if we can do that Mathew we will be quite safe from the tribe. But I am afraid you are not strong enough yet for such a trip," said Lillian.

"Oh yes I am, I think. While I am not fleshy yet I am feeling quite well and strong" said Mathew.

By sunrise the next morning Mathew and Lillian came to the river. Of course they had slackened their speed sometime before, so their horses would not be too worm to go into the water.

About a mile from the river they passed some wagon tires and other irons in a pile where it looked as though two or three wagons had been burned a day or two ago.

"The Indians must have done that," said Mathew, as they passed it. Of course they were in too much of a hurry to look around more or they would have seen evidence of a hard fight between emigrants and the Indians.

As they rode down to the water's edge, Mathew recognized the place and exclaimed, "This is the very place, Lillian, where I gained my freedom, and that grove you see yonder on that creek is where the robbers were and there is where the soldiers chained and shackled us."

"Oh, Mathew, I am so glad you got away," exclaimed Lillian with tears in her eyes.

After they had crossed the river and got out of sight of it, they stopped to rest their horses and let them feed, while they ate some venison and berries which Lillian was thoughtful enough to put up. After a good rest they resumed their journey southward but not quite so rapidly.

CHAPTER XIII.

The warrior's discovery of Lillian's disappearance. Lewanna's cruel treatment. Matthew and Lillian's journey home. Their narrow escape at a miner's camp. Home at last. Their greeting.

When the Indians found that Lillian was gone (the warriors just returned the night after Lillian and Mathew had started) they questioned Lewanna very closely but she was faithful to the last, and gave them no clew to her whereabouts. They tied her to a tree and left her all night alone in that position, but she would not tell them anything, but prayed not only for Lillian's safety but for her own people. Some of them went in pursuit through the mountains for several days but finally gave up finding her.

They were very angry at Lewanna, as they believed she had something to do with Lillian's escape, as her horse and saddle were also gone, and they treated her with more cruelty in consequence.

For three days and nights Mathew and Lillian traveled steadily and wearily, only stopping long enough to feed their horses and eat a lunch and had met with no serious accident or seen a living being except once a band of Indians at quite a distance off, but they saw a great deal of wild game of different kinds.

On the third day, as they were descending a gulch on their way over the mountains, they were very much sur-

prised to run into a camp of four miners. They were so engrosed in their work that they did not at first notice us. They had their sluice boxes and seemed to be washing out gold and were very much startled at Mathew's salutation. One of them at last recognized Mathew as the young man whom they had met and camped with nearly a year before, and after hearing his story advised him to go back home. But now finding that he had been successful in his undertaking warmly congratulated him. They seemed glad to see them but looked with rather strange eyes at the white woman dressed in the Indian garb, and were quite interested in their brief story. It was nearly noon time and the miners invited them up to the camp for dinner. The request was accepted thankfully.

While they were eating their dinner they were surprised by a half dozen Indians whom they espied down where they had been mining. They had left their pans there with considerable gold in them. The men began firing at them, at the same time the Indians were returning the fire which brought into view many more from over the hill.

Mathew and Lillian sprang for their horses, knowing that they had nothing in which to help make a defense, and away they rode over the hill in the opposite direction and down the gulch as fast as they could go. The firing still continued and an occasional war whoop reached their ears as down the rocky gulch they rode. They did not check up until they were far from the scene. No one will probably ever know the fate of these miners but the supposition is that they were all killed and to this day their sluice boxes are in that gulch, but undoubtedly have been washed down a considerable distance, it is impossible to tel just how far, as there have been several land slides in the gulch. This identical place where they were mining will probably never be known.

Mathew and Lillian indeed felt thankful that they had escaped the encounter with the Indians. In their haste to get away, Mathew lost the shackle which he had once worn, from where it was tied on the saddle, which he was taking home for a relic.

Much more might be said of the trip through that rough mountainous country by Mathew and Lillian, but we will leave a great deal for our reader to imagine; suffice it to say, they had much to say to each other of both past and future. As time rolled on they were coming nearer and nearer their dear homes, and with much anxiety, for they knew not what might have happened at home since Mathew's absence. But as fortune would have it everything had gone on all right, although their hearts were nearly crushed by the report in the papers of Mathew's capture with the robbers.

While it seemed as though they were not traveling fast, yet they were making good headway, and while their horses were almost tired out, they pressed them on with a promise that they should have extra care when they got home.

Mr. and Mrs Bentley had about given up hopes of Mathew's return, and grieved so much that they sometimes almost wished themselves dead; the Ainsley's consoling them as much as possible.

On the evening of October sixth, as the sun was going down, Mr. Bentley had just eaten his supper and walked out to the gate for a few moments. Some way he had been thinking of Mathew much that day as he had last seen him on the hill where he waved his hat. Mr. Bentley was just turning to go into the house when his attention was attracred by two horsemen just making their appearance on the brow of the hill. When Mathew and Lillian reached the top of the hill Mathew exclaimed, "There's father at the gate." He took off his hat and waved it in the same

peculiar manner as when he departed. Tears of joy came to Mr. Bently's eyes, for he well recognized that wave, and called his wife to come quickly who, throwing her apron on her head, came out. Mr. Bently full of joy exclaimed, "Our dear son is coming, I know it is Mathew." They were so near by this time that they heard what he said.

"Yes, father, your innocent boy and your long lost daughter," Mathew exclaimed as he and Lillian sprang from their tired horses. Mrs. Bently, almost overpowered with joy, exclaimed with a happy embrace, "God bless you dear children."

Lillian, of course, had on her Indian garb and was badly tanned but still those beautiful eyes and curly hair were as natural as when they last saw her.

After they had composed themselves and Mathew and his father had taken care of the horses, they all went over to Mr. Ainsley's. Lillian felt almost shy of them at first but words are inadequate to express that meeting.

They were not long in dressing her in her proper garb and a handsome young woman she was. Both families listened with absorbing interest to Lillian's story of her capture and captivity and her mode of living, and Lewanna her friend and her fidelity, also their travels and the beautiful cave which they had discovered in the mountains, the discovery of Mathew and caring for him, as well as their narrow escape at the miner's camp on their return home.

They were all not less interested in Mathew's travels and description of the Yellowstone National Park and the lone Indian whom he had the combat with, and his journey to the headwaters of the Gallatin river, and the poor Indian whom he had buried, the clue which led to the discovery of Lillian, the story of the poor old broken hearted man whom he camped with at the head waters of the Mis-

souri river, the drove of buffalo and the band of Indians, and his trip generally to the north.

"I had such a queer dream about you, Mathew," interrupted Mrs. Bently, "A few weeks ago I thought something terrible had happened you and then we saw in the paper about a man by the name of M. Bently was captured with some stage robbers and we thought sure that you were dead."

"Oh yes, mother, I didn't tell you about that yet," and Mathew went on and told them how he had accidently ran into the robber's rendezvous and was captured by the soldiers, also about them putting the shackle on him and his escape, also his hardships and starvation before Lillian and Lewanna found him.

CHAPTER XIV.

In conclusion.

In a few weeks there was a quiet wedding at the farm house and Mathew Bently was very proud of his sweet young wife. The old people each tried to vie with the other in doing well by the young couple and they were soon comfortably ensconced in a beautiful home by the river side. Bessie had grown to be a young lady and spent much of her time with Mathew and Lillian. She still has her old friend Nero who, though very old, loves her just as well as ever.

LEWANNA.

Lewanna felt very badly over the way she was treated by her people and was very lonesome since Lillian left her. Still she lived the same Christian life which Lillian had taught her, and always treated her people kindly and lovingly, but often wished to be away from them.

Several months after, Mathew and Lillian were settled down in their pleasant home, a lone and homeless Indian

came one evening at dusk to their door. Mathew heard the light rapping on the door and opened it. They were just at supper and Bessie was there. Mathew, in a minute, recognized the poor Indian maiden as Lewanna and cordially welcomed her in. Lilian sprang to her feet and exclaimed in surprise, "Oh, Lewanna, Lewanna, I am so glad to see you," and then turning to Bessie Lillian said, "Bessie, this is Lewanna who for nearly seven long years was a very dear friend to me and true to the end."

Lewanna told them her plain, simple story about the braves returning and how she had been mistreated by her people ever since Lillian had made her escape and that she could not live with them in peace and then she added, "And I came to you Lillie."

"I am very glad you did Lewanna," said Lillian.

"Yes," said Mathew, "and as long as we have a home you shall be as one of the family."

"Oh, tank you, tank you," exclaimed Lewanna in her broken language, with tears in her eyes.

They got clothing for her and made her feel at home as much as possible, and she seemed happy and contented. Lillian took great interest in teaching her how to cook and do other housework. For three years she was with them and at last married a wealthy young rancher and they now live on a beautiful ranch in the mountains some ten miles from Mathew Bentley's. Lillian and Lewanna often visit each other and sometimes with their devoted husbands wander over to the "Old Lamb Tree."

It happened that one time when Mathew and Lillian were visiting Lewanna at her mountain home, a large black bear was about to carry off one of the ranchman's fine young calves and Lewanna and Lillian seized the rifles and shot old bruin through the heart. Mathew and the ranchman were very much surprised when they returned from their

stroll and Mathew unjointed one left foot and leg at the knee and took it home for his cabinet. In looking through his saddle bags one day he discovered that he had brought home the mule shoe, and Lewanna gave him one of her bracelets which she had worn for many years and which he noticed she was wearing when he came to himself in the Bear Paw mountains.

Several years later, as the author was traveling through the mountains, his business called him to a beautiful ranch where he was invited to remain for dinner. He could not help but admire the beautiful home, as everything was in perfect order and the table filled with all the delicacies of life, prepared in the best of manner by Lewanna's own hand and she was as neat and tidy as could be. Two handsome children blessed their home whom they called Mathew and Lillian.

About this time a great mining excitement broke out in the gulch where the miners were supposed to have been killed and Mathew Bently went there to plat and lay out a town site and the men, while plowing and grading the streets, found the shackle and showed it to Mathew who recognized it. He exclaimed, "Gentlemen, I have worn this shackle but I was innocent of any crime."

THE END.